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ABSTRACT

Many farmworkers are faced with serious problems such as toxic drinking water, malnutrition, low levels of education and income, and poor health care. Based on statistical review, social surveys, and case studies, this document describes older farmworkers' living conditions, focusing on their housing problems. For many, housing is a luxury item and decent housing is often inconceivable. The housing problems faced by older farmworkers are complicated by a host of other problems. No programs were designed specifically by state governments to provide housing and other benefits to older farmworkers, and very few programs are developed for the general older population. The problems of elderly farmworkers relate directly to the problems of all older persons in general, as well as to the entire farmworkers community. The answer to providing decent housing to older farmworkers, therefore, lies in gaining a better understanding of how their problems relate to those of all farmworkers, and how these problems can be solved collectively. The following advocacy initiatives are recommended: (1) media exposure to the situation; (2) state and local policymakers awareness of the situation; (3) provision of technical assistance to build housing; (4) financial support on the public and private levels; (5) consideration for owner-occupied housing; (6) a conference of experts and advocates to exchange information and ideas; and (7) provision of health care and extended health care eligibility. This document contains 45 references, 27 data tables, and sample housing assistance forms. (ALL/GGH)

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THE PLIGHT OF OLDER FARMWORKERS

Housing Assistance Council

Consumer Affairs Section Department
AARP Housing Affairs Initiative

RC017408

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After the Harvest:
THE PLIGHT OF OLDER FARMWORKERS

A Report by the
Housing Assistance Council for

AARP

American Association of Retired Persons
Consumer Affairs • Program Department and the
AARP Minority Affairs Initiative

After the Harvest:

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The American Association of Retired Persons is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to helping older Americans achieve lives of independence, dignity and purpose by providing a wide range of direct member benefits and services and a host of community services programs and activities, the Association has become the nation's largest organization of older citizens.

The Housing Assistance Council (HAC) is a national nonprofit corporation working to increase the availability of decent housing for rural low-income people.

The AARP Minority Affairs Initiative aims to improve the economic, social and physical well-being of the nation's older minorities by addressing issues that directly affect their quality of life. In particular, it seeks to improve living conditions, better job opportunities, greater participation in public/private programs and agencies, and increased awareness of the status of minority elderly and of their many contributions to our nation.

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Foreword

In 1984, AARP received a letter from a group of older volunteers in Naples, Florida. The letter requested technical assistance in developing a congregate housing facility for older farmworkers in the Naples area.

In responding to this request, AARP discovered that information on older farmworkers and their living conditions were scarce or nonexistent. For example, there are relatively few specialized housing projects for farmworkers in the United States, and little or no published material about them was available. In addition, greater public awareness of the problems encountered by the workers in these projects and elsewhere is needed.

Hired agricultural workers, many of whom work seasonally and migrate hundreds or even thousands of miles, are among the most vulnerable groups in America. Many have little or no practical education, and most have little hope of escaping the cycle of poverty in which they are trapped. As a group, these workers consistently rank as the lowest-paid in the nation despite the fact that they are often exposed to hazardous working conditions, pesticides and debilitating stoop labor. They frequently live in housing that lacks indoor plumbing or other amenities that most Americans take for granted. Perhaps most tragic of all is their estimated average life expectancy -- less than 50 years.

A 1981 U.S. Department of Agriculture study* was brutally frank about the plight of farmworkers in this country:

> By virtually any objective economic measure, farmworkers as an occupational group fall below minimally-accepted labor force standards. Society identifies much farmwork as socially undesirable and farmworkers as a severely economically disadvantaged group of laborers whose conditions, as individuals and as an occupational group, tend to be self-perpetuating. The public is concerned about the lack of equity in farm labor legislation and regulation, heavy reliance on foreign workers, the problems of migratory workers, and other social ills related to agricultural employment.

* Ahearn, M.C., Health Care in Rural America USDA, ESCS, Ag. Info. Bulletin No. 428, 1981.

The public is far less aware of, and therefore less concerned with, the special problems that confront older farmworkers. Unlike their younger counterparts who can still work an eight, ten, or twelve hour day, many older farm laborers are unable to work at all. Most are economically impoverished, and many are ineligible for Social Security or federally-subsidized housing, and too frail to join their families during picking season migrations. For these individuals, daily living is a struggle, and many have no idea where to turn for help.

In an effort to assist these older farmworkers, AARP and the Housing Assistance Council (HAC) initiated the Older Farmworkers Housing Project, which is designed to:

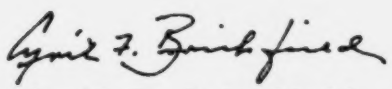
* develop public awareness of the plight of older farmworkers;

* provide technical assistance to local groups which have the ability to develop housing projects for retired farm laborers; and

* recommend public and private activities to help alleviate the living conditions of older farmworkers.

This report was produced by the Project. It examines the lives and housing of older hired agricultural workers, reviews proposed housing projects, and examines areas of the country where older farmworkers are most numerous. It also profiles the nation's only housing project designed exclusively for older farmworkers, and examines prototypes for similar projects in other parts of the country.

We hope this report will inspire you and your organization to become involved in efforts to improve the housing situation of older farmworkers.



Cyril F. Brickfield
Executive Director, AARP

1.

Rural Housing and the Elderly

Farmworker's house: Las Milpas, Texas, colonia.

The problems faced by older farmworkers should be considered within the context of issues involving all older persons. The elderly (over-65) population in the United States is projected by the Census Bureau to grow from 20.0 million in 1970 to 35.0 million in 2000, a 75.0 percent increase. But the country's total population is expected to grow by only 31.9 percent over the same period. The over-75 population between 1970 and 1982 grew from 7.5 million to 10.7 million, a jump of 42.7 percent. (2) With increased longevity and an aging baby-boom group, the numbers of both over-65 and over-75 citizens will continue to increase rapidly.

The 1985 Economic Report of the President notes that retirement planning has become increasingly important for the nation as well as for families. The proportion of the population that is elderly ... will explode as the baby-boom generation retires. In 1900 one person in 25 was 65 years of age or older; to day that proportion is one in eight; by 2030 one person in five will be elderly. In about 35 years the United States as a whole is expected to have the same proportion of elderly as Florida does today. In 50 years the ratio of people over 65 to the working-age population will be 2 1/2 times as great as it was in 1950. No other demographic change will influence the nation in the next 50 years as much as this "graying" of America. Every American and every facet of society will be affected. (3)

This dramatic shift will obviously increase the need for services to the elderly. But in most states, few new nursing home beds are being provided because of moratoria on construction. Even before these moratoria, rural areas often had too few nursing home beds for those who truly needed nursing home care. Intermediate care facilities in rural America are even more scarce. And this scarcity, along with the fact that rural people are more likely than their urban counterparts to have health problems, has created a problem of crisis proportions. (4)

VICTOR ALEMAN/COURTESY OF UNITED FARM WORKERS

After the grape harvest: Delano, California.

Rural areas also have large numbers of elderly persons who need appropriate and affordable housing. For example, in 1983 (the latest year for which full data is available), the poverty rate for the elderly was 12.1 percent in metropolitan areas, but 17.8 percent in non-metropolitan areas. Because of their poverty, many of these rural residents live in housing which is dilapidated and without basic amenities. For example, there are more than 300,000 rural elderly (65 years old and older) households which lack plumbing and 1.7 million households which have no central heating. Two-thirds of all elderly who live alone own their homes. But those in rural areas live on farms, in trailers, up hollows, or down dirt roads where their problems are often hidden from view in a picturesque landscape. (5)

In Appendix A, Table 1 shows the number and poverty rates of the elderly by race in 1983 for all areas and for non-metropolitan area. These numbers show that white, black and Hispanic older persons are more likely to be impoverished if they live in non-metropolitan areas.

It's easy to dismiss these older persons. They're often portrayed as couples in rocking chairs on the porches of rural shacks -- a quaint cliche which will inevitably disappear with the passage of time. But, unlike the elderly in cities, they're often too isolated to meet with each other or to organize on their own behalf. More than half the rural elderly poor live alone, and many have no vehicle or telephone. (6)

Among these rural elderly, housing opportunities are largely limited to those who can move into or near town, closer to transportation, health, food services and other people. For those who can't move, rental and long-term care facilities are in short supply, and even when they are available, they're often the least desirable housing options. Many rural elderly have dilapidated homes, but they often own them "free and clear," and appear to be inextricably attached to their land. (7)

Eventually, however, fully-independent living becomes impossible for most. One alternative is senior housing with supportive services such as meal preparation, housekeeping, transportation and home health care. This alternative is often referred to as congregate housing.

Congregate housing includes sufficient services to enable many partially-impaired elderly persons to remain in non-institutional settings. These services include at least one prepared meal per day, served in a group setting; housekeeping and personal care services; and transportation. Some health care as well as social and recreational activities are provided by many congregate housing centers.

Congregate housing is particularly needed because of the lack of long-term alternatives in rural and non-metropolitan areas. Many present and potential residents of nursing homes in fact do not need the level of expensive, full-time health care that is provided in a nursing home setting.

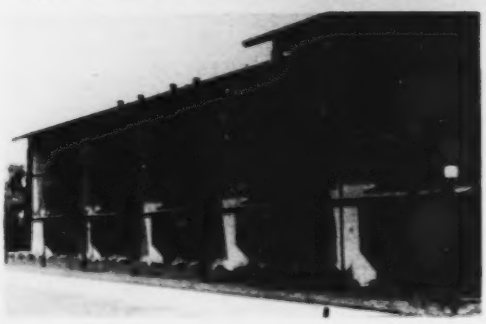
The Federal Government Response

Many older people in rural areas need and (if it's available) will use housing rehabilitation assistance or move to congregate units in their home communities. One resource for this kind of assistance is the Farmers Home Administration (FmHA) of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, particularly the agency's Section 504 grant and loan program for home repair and its Section 515 rental program.

The FmHA Section 515 rental program provides newly-constructed, affordable rental housing through the use of 50-year mortgages at one percent interest and a limited supply of rental assistance subsidies. The emphasis on new construction is due to the lack of suitable rural rental housing and the special design needs of the elderly.

Section 515 rural rental housing began in 1963 as a rental program for older persons. While the program's scope was later broadened to include families, it has maintained an elderly focus. FmHA officials have estimated that approximately 35 percent of the 330,000 housing units produced since 1963 have been for exclusive use by the elderly.

The FmHA also provides funds for farm labor housing. To be eligible to live in FmHA farm labor housing, tenants must receive a substantial portion of their incomes from farm labor and be U.S. citizens or permanent resident aliens. However, former farmworkers are not eligible for FmHA farm labor housing unless they were already residents when they were still employed as farmworkers. This restriction has effectively made this housing inaccessible to most retired farmworkers.



FmHA-sponsored congregate apartments: Kingsburg, California.

Current FmHA policy emphasizes repairs rather than new construction. The 504 program provides loans and grants for home repair for very low-income (50 percent of area median income) persons. In fiscal year 1985, this program provided $12.5 million in grants and $17.5 million in loans.

A leading model for congregate housing is the demonstration project initiated jointly by FmHA and the Administration on Aging (AoA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services in 1979. The project was designed to support small apartment complexes in rural areas which had inadequate housing for the elderly. (8) Each of the ten projects sites was supported with $1 million in FmHA Section 515 low-interest rental housing loan funds.

AoA provided funds for such supportive services as meals and transportation under the Model Projects authority of the Older Americans Act of 1965.

An evaluation of the AoA and FmHA project, conducted in 1983, found it to be successful. The evaluation determined that congregate housing services could be provided, in 1983, for an average annual cost of about $2,500 per unit. Annual cost per unit for congregate services ranged from $2,075 in Iowa to $2,818 in New York. The cost per unit for land and construction ranged from $25,800 to $49,200. The evaluation concluded, among other findings, that:

- It is clearly possible to find credible developers who can and will join forces with agencies that serve older persons to build and successfully operate congregate housing in rural communities ....
- Congregate housing projects are meeting a need for housing and services in their host communities ....
- Most current tenants are well-satisfied with congregate living ....
- None of the projects appeared ... to have an "institutional atmosphere" .... (9)

As of February 1987, all of the original demonstration project sites were still functioning. In addition, ten other rural congregate projects have been established with FmHA Section 515 loans. This ongoing expansion and the success of the original projects demonstrates that the congregate housing model is a viable option for some rural elderly.

2.

An Overview of Older Farmworkers

VICTOR ALLEMAN/COURTESY OF UFW

In the fields near Oxnard, California

Within the broader group of rural elderly, older farmworkers have special concerns and needs. But statistics on the size and status of this population, like data on farmworkers generally, are imperfect. In this report, we've surveyed the available information on this sub-population, recognizing that it has its limitations -- primarily the fact that most of the data sources apply to active workers.

Older farmworkers cannot be defined rigidly as age 65 and over. Given the shorter lifespans, harsh working conditions, and early retirement of many farmworkers, younger subgroups -- for example, 45 and over, and 55 and over -- are included in the discussion of older farmworkers in this report.

Biannually, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Economic Research Service publishes The Hired Farm Working Force (HFWF), a statistical report on farmworkers drawn from the Census Bureau's annual Current Population Survey. (10) The 1983 report, the latest available in the series, indicates that there are 2.595 million migrant and seasonal farmworkers in the United States. (Migrant farmworkers travel across state or county lines and stay away from home overnight to do agricultural work. Seasonal farmworkers labor in their home areas without staying away overnight.)

It's important to note that the HFWF numbers may be a low estimate. A 1977 study for the Legal Services Corporation estimated 5.003 million migrant and seasonal farmworkers in the United States, almost twice the 1983 HFWF figure. (11)

In Appendix A, Tables 2 through 11 include the HFWF data for 1983, which reveal a number of important facts. Older persons comprise a relatively large part of the total migrant farmworker population, particularly among minority farmworkers (especially blacks). Women are also an

important force among older farmworkers. Many older farmworkers work at least 40 hours a week in agricultural labor, and are more likely than their younger counterparts to earn a substantial part of their incomes from agricultural labor.

The Hired Farm Working Force Report shows the following:

* Of 2,595,000 hired farmworkers (migrant and seasonal) in 1983, 17 percent were age 45 or older and nine percent were age 55 and older. (Table 2)

* Older migrant farmworkers were a large proportion of the total migrant population. Of 226,000 migrants in 1983, 24 percent were age 45 or older and six percent were at least 55 years old. (Table 2)

* Fourteen percent of white hired farmworkers, 20 percent of Hispanic hired farmworkers, and a substantial 28 percent of blacks and other hired farmworkers are age 45 or older. (Table 3) Figures show that 73 percent of farmworkers are white, but this may be a high estimate and is a subject of dispute among farm labor experts.

* Among farmworkers of all ages, only 16 percent live on farms. However, among farmworkers age 45 and older, 21 percent live on farms. (Table 3)

* Twenty-four percent of farmworkers age 45 and older are women. Among black and other farmworkers age 45 and older, 33 percent are women. Females age 55 to 64 make up a relatively large proportion of the total farmworkers in that age group -- 32 percent -- but women are only 22 percent of the total of farmworkers of all ages. (Table 4)

* Half of all hired farmworkers age 65 and older worked less than 25 days on farms in 1983, but 24 percent of this same age group worked 150 days or more. (Table 5)

* A fairly large proportion -- 46 percent -- of male agricultural laborers age 55 to 64 worked 150 or more days annually. Among female farmworkers in the same age group, 40 percent did 150 or more days of farmwork in 1983. (Table 6)

* Of 973,000 farmworkers who did less than 25 days of hired farm labor in 1983, 13 percent were age 45 or older. Of black and other farmworkers who did less than 25 days of work, 27 percent were 45 or older.

Among Hispanic farmworkers who worked 25 days or less, 13 percent were 45 or older. (Table 7)

* Of 888,000 who did 25 to 149 days of farmwork, 15 percent were at least age 45. Among blacks and others, 21 percent were age 45 or older. (Table 8)

* Older farmworkers comprise a larger proportion of the population that spends more than 150 days doing farmwork. For example, of 735,000 persons who did 150 or more days of farmwork in 1983, 26 percent were age 45 or older. Thirty-eight percent of the blacks and others and 26 percent of the Hispanics who did 250 or more days of farmwork were age 45 or older. (Table 9)

* A comparison of Tables 10 and 11 show that farmworkers age 45 to 54 earn 76 percent of their income from farmwork. Those age 55 to 64 earn 64 percent, and those 65 and over earn 65 percent of of their income from agricultural labor.

* Farmworkers age 55 to 64 have total annual median earnings of only $4,470, and those 65 and over have only $962 in median earnings.*

* Table 12 shows that younger Hispanics, whether they live in metropolitan or non-metropolitan areas, have much higher levels of education than their over-45 counterparts. Those with less education will probably have a more difficult time dealing with the problems of old age. They may be intimidated by government forms, checking accounts, hospital admission forms, credit applications and other types of paperwork. Intimidation may increase with advancing age. (From Frank Fratoe, USDA, 1981)

* There is also extensive disability among farmworkers. A 1974 study for the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare found that 44.5 percent of the nation's farmworker households had at least one disabled member. Over 31 percent of the heads of farmworker households said their work capacity was limited because of a physical, mental or emotional disability. Household heads in the United States as a whole have a disability rate of 10.6 percent. (12)

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* In 1979, the poverty threshold was $7,412 for a household of four and $3,599 for a household of one. By 1985, the poverty threshold was $10,900 for four and $5,470 for one.

VICTOR ALEMAN/COURTESY OF UFW

'Older farmworkers are a mostly unseen part of the labor force . . .'

Housing Assistance Council Older Farmworker Survey

In addition to the statistical review drawn from the Hired Farm Working Force, the Housing Assistance Council (HAC) conducted its own survey of state farmworker organizations. (See Bibliography). Interviews with housing or other experts representing organizations in 25 states, completed in December 1985, revealed some important facts: (13)

* None of the states surveyed has a housing project specifically for older farmworkers.

* In a majority of the states surveyed, there are housing projects that house older farmworkers and other older persons who have worked in a variety of occupations.

* In nearly 80 percent of the states surveyed, farmworker activists interviewed felt that the condition of older and retired farmworkers' housing is poor or very poor. In the remaining 20 percent of the states, older farmworkers' housing was perceived to be in fair condition. In no state was this housing stock felt to be in good, very good or excellent condition.

* Among the states surveyed, an unweighted average of 84 percent of elderly farmworkers earn less than $7,500 in annual income; 67 percent earn less than $5,500 annually.

* An unweighted average of 67 percent of elderly farmworkers are male; 33 percent are female.

* Most older farmworkers are renters or live with other family members who rent. However, ownership is more prevalent in some states -- Oklahoma and Iowa, for example. According to respondents in Texas, over half that state's older farmworkers own their homes.

* Most often, retired farmworkers live with an adult child's family. Very few are in long-term care facilities. And the remainder live alone or with their spouses.

* Survey respondents were also asked to identify types of income and other support received by older farmworkers. The results are shown in Table 13. Food stamps are an important source of support for this group in many states. In 44 percent of the responding states, all or almost all older farmworkers receive food stamps. But in 61 percent of the states, almost none or none of the older farmworkers live in subsidized housing. In 46 percent of the responding states, almost none or none have earnings from employment other than farmwork.

* Table 14 shows that older farmworkers often have specific kinds of health problems. For example, in 34 percent of the states, over half the older farmworkers have heart or circulatory problems. In 53 percent of the states, over half of the states, half or more of the older farmworkers have health bone, joint or muscular problems. And in nearly half or more of the older farmworkers have health problems resulting from exposure to pesticides.

U.S. Bureau of the Census Data

HAC also analyzed housing and demographic data collected by the Bureau of the Census for older farmworkers in several key states. The California Human Development Corporation (CHDC) provided data extracted from the U.S. 1980 Census of Population and Housing. Appendix Tables 15 to 23 show major findings from this data for the nation and for three important farm labor states -- California, Florida and Texas. The numbers are roughly parallel to the USDA HFWF results, although that study does not include any information on a state-by-state basis. Both studies show that California and Texas farmworkers are mostly Hispanic, and in Texas many workers migrate north to follow the harvests. Florida farmworkers are more likely to be black.

Table 15 shows that there were 240,000 hired farmworkers age 55 and older in the United States in 1980. (The USDA study reported 248,000 in this age group in 1983.) Of the total, 164,000 were white, 36,000 black, 28,000 Hispanic, and 11,000 of other races. In the 55-and-over age group, California alone had almost 37,000 farmworkers, Florida over 16,000 and Texas almost 21,000. (Tables 16 to 18)

Nationally, relatively large numbers of black farmworkers are likely to live in housing with inadequate plumbing facilities. Almost 34 percent of black farmworkers over age 65 and nearly 30 percent of black farmworkers between 55 and 64 live in units with incomplete plumbing. (Table 19) In Texas and Florida, and to a lesser extent in California, both blacks and Hispanics often live in housing without adequate plumbing. (Tables 20-22) These are the conditions of the permanent homes of older farmworkers, rather than the temporary housing they might occupy while in the migrant labor stream. The temporary housing is usually worse in terms of overcrowding, lack of complete plumbing and other problems.

Housing in rural colonias: 14 people live in this house.

Educational levels are often quite low for older farmworkers. Table 23 shows that four of five Hispanic farmworkers age 55 and over have less than eight years of schooling. Fewer than one in ten of this group is a high school graduate. Elderly black farmworkers are almost as poorly prepared. Four of five such workers age 65 and older have less than eight years of education.

The CHDC data also show that language is frequently a barrier for older Hispanic farmworkers. Over 53 percent of Hispanic farmworkers age 55 to 64 speak English poorly or not at all. Of Hispanic farmworkers age 65 and older, 56 percent speak English poorly or not at all.

Unfortunately, older farmworkers are a mostly unseen part of the labor force when they are active workers. And once retired, this group of mostly low-income persons may slip even further from public view, particularly if they have no support from family members and are ineligible for public assistance. Poverty, housing deficiencies, poor health and other problems clearly mark this group as a population at greater risk than nearly any other segment of society.

VICTOR ALEMAN/COURTESY OF UFW

Many elderly are valued family members and want to live with their families.

3.

A Case Study of Older Farmworkers in South Texas

VICTOR ALEMAN/COURTESY OF UFW

Near Lamont, California.

To shed light on the status and housing of older farmworkers, the Housing Assistance Council conducted a brief case study of conditions in south Texas. This area, the Rio Grande Valley, is the home base for most migrant farmworkers in Texas. In terms of poverty and unemployment, it is also one of the nation's most depressed regions. For example, during all of 1985 and 1986 the McAllen-Edinburg metro area in Texas had the nation's highest unemployment rate (McAllen is the valley's principal city). Of 86 U.S. counties with poverty rates of 33.3 percent or higher in 1980, 12 are in south Texas. Starr, one of the 12, is the nation's second poorest county, with a poverty rate of 50.6 percent. The Valley also has the only two urban counties (i.e., within Metropolitan Statistical Areas) with 1980 poverty rates of 30.0 percent or higher. They are Cameron and Hidalgo, two of the four counties featured in this case study. (14)

In the southern most Rio Grande Valley many older or retired farmworkers live in substandard housing (i.e., units that are overcrowded or without complete plumbing) -- with families or alone -- as homeowners. Many are ineligible for benefit programs such as Social Security and Supplemental Security Income. They are often isolated, without transportation or telephone. Census data show there are at least 10,000 elderly (65 and over) or retired farmworkers in the southernmost four-county area bordering Mexico, 4,000 of whom live alone.

The rental housing programs in the area bypass the elderly farmworker (though it is not known how many of these farmworkers are actually homeowners). Some farmworkers will not leave the home and land they own because they represent security. And many do not qualify for either HUD Section 202 housing or FmHA farm labor housing in the area because of their very low incomes and/or status as aliens.

Weatherization programs do not offer assistance on a scale large enough to have a significant impact on elderly farmworkers.

The Rio Grande Valley is the entry area and subsequent home base for many Mexicans and Central Americans who immigrate to the United States. In the four counties on the US-Mexico border, most of the population is primarily Spanish-speaking, and most of the foreign-born population is comprised of recent immigrants from Mexico (see Table 24). There are no reliable figures on the number who become farmworkers, but area residents say that most of the rural settlers in the region work or have worked in the fields on a migrant or seasonal basis.

According to Texas Rural Legal Aid, nearly all the migrant and seasonal farmworkers in Texas are Hispanic. Almost one-half reside in the Rio Grande Valley, and almost 80 percent of these individuals have annual incomes far below the poverty level. (15)

Most south Texas farmworkers live in colonias, which are the rural equivalent of urban barrios (Hispanic neighborhoods). Colonias are usually overcrowded settlements occupied by Mexican-Americans. They seldom have sewage facilities, a clean water supply, electricity or paved streets. They are often in flood-prone areas and rely for waste disposal on septic tanks, which are likely to contaminate any wells on the lots because the clay soil does not "perk" (drain). Instead, it cracks, and the cracks may conduct waste to the water supply.

Colonias spring up as private developers buy, grade and subdivide large tracts of land, then sell lots (generally from 2,500 to about 5,000 square feet) for about $7,000 to $20,000 each, with short-term financing at high interest rates. The staff of Colonias del Valle, a south Texas anti-poverty organization, estimated that the private developer reaps a 60 percent profit from a colonia. The profitability of colonias is evident from their rapid proliferation: one interviewee calculated that the number of colonias in the Lower Rio Grande Valley had increased since 1968 from 60 to 136, with 50 to 200 homes in each.

With the sale of lots, the developer's responsibility ends. The absence of building codes outside the cities is apparent from the ensuing variety of self-constructed dwelling types, shapes and colors, and from the obvious lack of amenities.

Most colonias have dirt or clay roads and overcrowded lots, with tiny, dilapidated dwellings and adjacent outhouses. Often, one-room dwellings are inhabited by large families. Homes are seldom insulated and poorly caulked. Non-weather-resistant indoor paint is often used on their exteriors.

Water must be hauled from nearby cities or from irrigation ditches that are often contaminated with pesticides. In the one colonia in which an FmHA-financed water supply project was installed, HAC staff visited a family of six whose shower was outside next to the outhouse, and who complained that they had to pay $400 for a hook-up to the local water system. (Others reported higher fees of up to $500). Such costs are prohibitive for most individual colonia households, and it is not uncommon for several homes to be connected through water hoses to one meter.

Data on conditions in the colonias are difficult to obtain, but there are some estimates. According to the United Farm Workers, 41 percent of farmworker homes in the colonias have no indoor toilets, and 20 percent have no direct access to safe drinking water. According to Colonias del Valle, which operates a weatherization program for the poor, 70 percent of colonia homes are eligible for weatherization assistance because of the low incomes of their occupants. The weatherization program in 1985 had applications from 650 households, of which 180 were actually assisted.

Progress is conspicuous for some families, particularly among those with members who have "gone north" for employment. Households have added rooms or entirely new houses as their incomes grew. Consequently, their lots often contain a series of brightly colored units, increasing in size and amenities. Such signs of improved incomes did not, however, bring the communities up to acceptable standards, and are not evident among the homes of the elderly who live alone.

Progress in a colonia: Owner had 'gone North' to find work and was able to make some improvements.

The Older Farmworker Population of South Texas

It's difficult to obtain reliable information on the farmworker population as a whole, but it's even more difficult to determine the number of farmworkers who are now retired or elderly, in order to assess their housing needs. Estimates have been made based on interviews with persons familiar with the area. Tables 24 and 26 show that most of the area's elderly residents and even larger proportions of the elderly poor (including those who live alone) are primarily of Spanish origin. Interviewers were told that at least half of the area's elderly residents would have past or current employment in agriculture, and that the proportion would rise for those who are poor or of Spanish origin. It is noteworthy that, especially for the population of Spanish origin, the poverty rate increases with age. Table 24 shows that 43 to 54 percent of the elderly of Spanish origin over the age of 65 are poor.*

It's clear that a concentration of older farmworkers lives in the four counties concerned, and that they are likely to overlap the 10,000 elderly poor of Spanish origin. It's also likely that most live in the inadequate housing prevalent in the colonias. There are some elderly housing projects in the area, but older farmworkers are generally excluded from these because of their lack of Social Security documentation. Moreover, Census poverty statistics do not include those elderly living in nursing, convalescent, or rest homes for the aged in other institutions which might offer adequate shelter.

Table 27 provides some indicators of living conditions for elderly households of Spanish origin. Most own their homes, but a relatively high proportion lack telephones, vehicles, plumbing, kitchen facilities, and other standard housing features. This table does not include the living conditions

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* In using these figures, the limitations of the sample used in this report should be kept in mind. The year the census was taken (1980), the small area involved, and the known census undercount of Spanish-origin households are mitigating factors. Poverty, population size, and the number of colonias in the region have all increased since 1979, the year for which 1980 census poverty statistics were gathered. However, the four-county border area chosen for analysis probably offers the best population base for estimating numbers of farmworkers in the entire Rio Grande Valley.

of the many elderly of Spanish origin who live with their families and are no longer counted by the census as heads of households. Since Table 27 includes the elderly of all income levels, it also may not reflect the housing needs of the poorest elderly -- those most likely to be farmworkers.

It is not known how many of the area's elderly live alone, but one measure of isolation may be the census figures on "unrelated individuals." The 1980 Census reported more than 4,000 elderly unrelated individuals (i.e. single persons of Spanish origin, age 65 or older, with incomes below the poverty level in the four-county area of the valley (see Table 26). The poverty rate for unrelated individuals increases sharply with age and Spanish origin; ultimately, more than three-fourths of single elderly persons of single elderly persons of Spanish origin are poor.

Interviews with staff of the United Farm Workers Union, the Texas Farm Workers Union, and two community-based nonprofit organizations, Colonias Del Valle and Amigos Del Valle tended to support census data. These groups pointed out that most older or retired farmworkers live in poor, uninsulated, self-constructed housing which they own. The majority live with family members, although a significant number live alone. They are generally unable to obtain much or any Social Security due to their lack of documented employment. One farmworker advocate described her father, who had worked from age 12 to 65 in the fields and now at age 67 receives $225 a month in SSI. He also receives $10 a month in food stamps. This low level of assistance means that he must still work, driving a tractor.

Most older farmworkers reportedly want to live near or with their families, and would rather receive rehabilitation and modification assistance to improve their homes than move into a rental project.

Mr. C, a deaf and retired 59 year-old farmworker, lives in a one-room shack in Colonia Charro neighborhood, and is not eligible for Social Security or SSI benefits. His wife has left him, and is living with his children in Florida. He has worked in the United States for ten years, but has lived in this Colonia for only five months.

Mr. C's home is, at most, 90 square feet. The floor is dirt; the roof and walls have gaps that expose the inside to the weather. He has no plumbing or electricity, but he has an outhouse and get water from a neighbor's hose. He burns wood in a small stove for heat. He receives $60 a month in food stamps, which provides him one meal a day.

Colonia Charro, in Texas: The floor is dirt; there is no plumbing or electricity.

Mr. C paid $6,000 for his lot in 1981 and is unwilling to move unless he can sell it for that much. He is very anxious about surviving the winter months.

There are hundreds of similiar cases in Hidalgo, Cameron, and Willacy Counties. Mr. C. may be eligible for FmHA Section 504 assistance (home repair for low-income persons) as his deafness would give him a priority for loan assistance.

Health problems of Older Farmworkers. According to a study by the University of Texas Medical Branch (Galveston), the incidence of influenza and pneumonia, tuberculosis, strep throat, hepatitis, and scarlet fever is much higher among farmworkers than among other Texas residents. The United Farmworkers Union reports that in 1985 there were 225 Mexican-American leprosy patients along the Gulf Coast and the Lower Rio Grande Valley. A 1979 study found that another 300 Mexican-Americans are privately treated at health clinics in the Rio Grande Valley, often for leprosy. (16)

The Catholic Valley Home Health Agency confirms the relatively high incidence of housing-related health problems, such as tuberculosis, which is attributed to considerable crossing back and forth across the border. The Agency also reports a relatively high incidence of respiratory and communicable diseases, particularly in communicable diseases, particularly in winter; and diarrhea and dysentery, especially in areas where outdoor toilets are used. Other notable health problems, not necessarily housing-related, are relatively high incidences of heart disease and diabetes.

The lack of medical care is a major problem. Older farmworkers have few resources for transportation, are generally far from city services, and have no health insurance. They lack the documentation needed for eligibility for Medicare or Medicaid. Although some agencies will take patients who cannot afford to pay and who have no documentation, few find their way to a home health agency. Many older farmworkers live alone, are unaware of this resource, and do not go to a doctor who might refer them to the agency until, in one staff persons word's, "They're half dead." As the figures in Table 27 show, many do not have a vehicle or telephone and may be dependent upon a neighbor or friend to drive them to a doctor.

Other Sites

Weslaco Housing Authority. The Weslaco Housing Authority operates a Section 514/516 FmHA farm labor housing project of 289 units in the Rio Grande Valley. This project is particularly interesting because it was established by the Farm Security Administration in the 1930s. Its rents are low, beginning at $76 a month (including utilities) for a one-bedroom unit, compared to the estimated local market rent of $250 plus utilities. About 70-80 households with migrants live in the project.

Only two residents are thought by the project manager to be retired farmworkers because, as mentioned previously, former farmworkers are not eligible for FmHA farm labor housing unless they were already residents when they became farmworkers.

The Rio Grande Valley: Weslaco Housing Authority farm labor housing project.

Military Highway Water Supply Corporation. Military Highway has developed water facilities for 5,000 families, including 25,000 people in the Lower Rio Grande Valley. The corporation was developed to provide water service to colonias. Water districts have existed in the Lower Rio Grande Valley since 1937, but they provided water for irrigation only. Residents of colonias were stymied in their attempts to influence the corporation's decision-making. Even though they and other area residents were required to pay "fees" (essentially, water district taxes), they weren't allowed to vote or run as water district candidates because they weren't farmers. A legal services lawsuit filed on their behalf succeeded in having the fee requirement dropped, but not in gaining access to the water district government.

Ultimately, support for a water supply corporation came from the Catholic church, which provided $350,000 to cover the "meaningful user" contribution required by the FmHA for a loan. Military Highway then obtained loans from both FmHA and the Economic Development Administration (EDA).

HAC staffers were taken to see a colonia in Las Milpas, served by Military Highway with FmHA financing. Residents of this colonia had reported that water service hook-up fees were prohibitively high; a local advocate explained that these fees covered costs for late-comers to the service, and that Military Highway was exploring ways to lower costs.

HAC also saw Military Highway's first sewer project, for a colonia in Progresso. Construction was being delayed by condemnation proceedings against a local homeowner found by the Public Health Department who lived too close to the lagoons. Eventually, 380 colonia homes will be served.

In addition, Military Highway has built 50 bathrooms in another colonia, making use of a development grant from the Department of Health and Human Services.

Amigos del Valle. Amigos del Valle, a nonprofit organization has developed three Section 202 elderly housing projects, in Brownsville (100 units), McAllen (72 units) and Harlingen (55 units). Together they contain 227 units.

The McAllen project, called Casa de Amigos #2, has 72 apartments, a community building, an office and a non-rental unit for a staff member. Of the 72 units, six have two bedrooms (789 square feet) and 66 have one bedroom (613 square feet). Eight of the one bedroom units are for the physically handicapped. The project was initially occupied in 1982 and has a 100 percent occupancy rate with a waiting list. Per unit cost of construction was $29,130. Contract rents are $433 for one bedroom units and $517 for two bedroom units; utility allowances are $35 and $46, respectively. The tenant's monthly average rent for both one and two bedroom units is $56.

Although the housing director stated that 86 percent of the residents were of Spanish origin, he estimated that no more than half of these would have been farmworkers, because, "in the age bracket concerned, most wouldn't have Social Security," and would not qualify as tenants. So, at most, 110-120 of Amigo's Section 202 units are occupied by former farmworkers.

Colonias Del Valle. Colonias, a community-based nonprofit organization, has a weatherization program with a very long waiting list. Several local people said that the program's first-come, first-served policy prevented it from meeting emergency needs. As discussed earlier, the program served over a fourth of the nearly 650 who applied for assistance in 1985. It is likely that many others who may be in need are discouraged by the waiting list or are unfamiliar with the resource. The wait may be as long as one year.

Other projects. There are two other church-sponsored retirement centers in the area, and both Colonias del Valle and Amigos del Valle are proposing additional Section 202 projects.

A number of interviewees suggested that the most appropriate approach to elderly farmworker needs would be rehabilitation or new construction assistance for homeowners, rather than rental housing assistance. Two reasons were given:

- Reportedly, Texas farmworkers, unlike farmworkers in Florida and California, generally own their homes. They are attached to the land, which provides them with some security, freedom, equity, and supplemental resources, such as gardens.

- The extended family dominates the culture. Most elderly are valued family members and want to live with their families, even in deplorable housing conditions. HAC staff saw much evidence confirming these circumstances, including many detached units provided for grandparents on their children's land.

On the other hand, Amigos del Valle reports that demand is high for units in elderly rental projects. It is unclear if these units are sought by colonias residents or other farmworkers, but they are undoubtedly sheltering elderly. It is likely that Amigos del Valle and other agencies in the area will continue to operate elderly rental housing projects. At least some rental units already exist; this may be an additional reason to emphasize homeownership assistance, which aside from minimal weatherization resources, is virtually absent from the area.

Homeownership assistance in making repairs to houses like this one is virtually absent from many areas.

4.

Housing of Older Farmworkers: Models of Existing and Planned Projects

Agbiyani Center: Delano, California.

As discussed earlier, there is relatively little housing designed and operated specifically for older farmworkers, and only a few projects are currently being planned. Most of these projects are located in (or planned for) agricultural areas in Florida, California, and Texas.

California. The Paulo Agbiyani Retirement Center, located two miles outside Delano, in Kern County, California, is reportedly the oldest and perhaps still the only retired farmworker housing project in the nation. It was constructed by the United Farm Workers Union (UFW) in 1974 and 1975 for single Filipino men who are retired farmworkers. Typically, these men came to the United States (without families) from the Phillipines several decades ago. Many worked in the fields, never married and are now without family support structures during their later years.

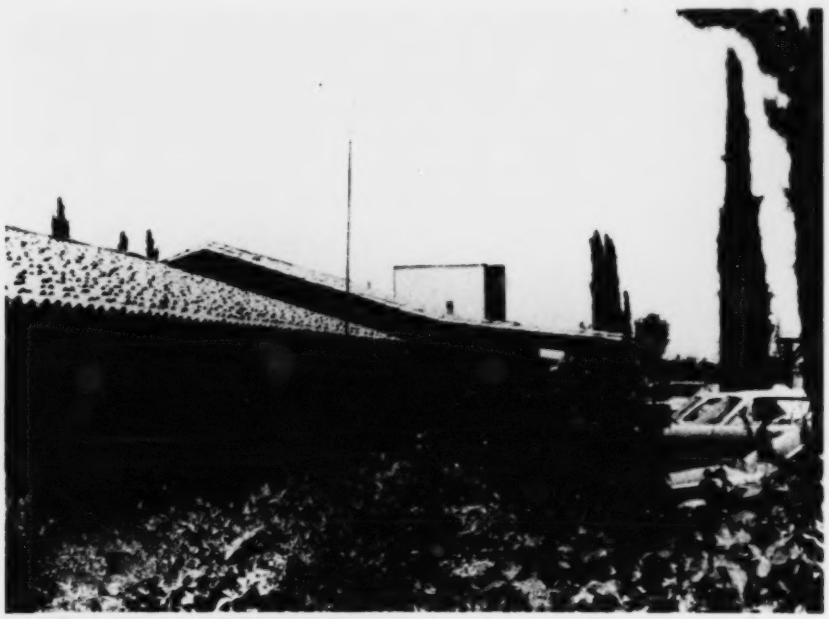
Paulo Agbiyani was an elderly Filipino farmworker and early UFW supporter. While walking a union picket line in the 1960s, Agbiyani suffered a heart attack. He was turned away from the local Delano hospital, in keeping with that institution's policy of not admitting Hispanics and Filipinos. Desperately ill, Agbiyani died enroute to another hospital in more distant Bakersfield. The housing facility was named in his honor.

The Agbiyani Center is part of the UFW's "Forty Acres" complex, which includes several other UFW buildings, among them a regional union office and an inoperative health clinic. As of May 1986, 37 retired Filipino farmworkers

occupied the center. All the residents were men, although in the past there have been two women and one couple. The UFW is actively trying to fill the remaining 21 rooms.

The project has 58 single rooms; all of them have approximately 225 square feet of floor space. The first two feet of the 16-foot room depth provide closet and entrance hall space, so that the actual room dimension is 14 feet x 14 feet. Every two rooms share a large bath. At one end of the bathroom is a large, built-in locker or closet for additional storage. Each room is furnished with a bed, desk, chairs and dresser, but many residents have provided their own furniture. Each room opens onto both an interior hall and an exterior courtyard. The rooms are small but cozy, attractive and well maintained.

The project is laid out in a large "U", with kitchen, dining room, office and community rooms in the center. Bedrooms radiate from the center at the bottom of the "U". Both common and private spaces face onto an attractive central courtyard filled with plants and trees. Outside the "U" are extensive individual garden plots and chicken coops.



The United Farm Workers Union constructed the Agbiyani Center, 'perhaps the only retired farmworker housing project in the nation.'

The project charges its residents $175 a month -- $75 for meals and $100 for room rent. Comparable local rents are $200 to $250 a month for room only. Most residents receive Social Security benefits and/or Supplemental Security Income, but few have any other sources of financial support. The average income for residents is approximately $565 a month.

The center offers three meals a day, seven days a week. There is no transportation service, but an inexpensive taxi is available and several residents have private automobiles. For special trips involving several residents, the center often hires a van. The dining room and the main communal room adjoin each other through a large, open threshold. Both are pleasant, comfortable and decorated with memorabilia. The center's office is next to the communal room. Meal service is cafeteria style, and everyone is responsible for clearing, scraping and sorting his or her own dishes, utensils and food scraps.

Most of the center's residents, who range in age from 63 to 88, came to the United States in the 1920s and 1930s seeking work. A pre-World War II California law forbade Asian marriages to non-Asians, so most of the Filipino workers who live at the center were left without family resources at retirement, although one tenant has a family in Delano, and several married, despite the state's miscegenation statute.

The center's manager, like most UFW professional workers, is a volunteer, although she receives a small living allowance from the union. The three-person kitchen staff is paid.

The building cost just over $260,000 to construct in the mid-1970s. Most of this expenditure was for materials. Volunteers, including many from trade unions, provided most of the labor, planning and design for the project. Funding came from internal UFW loans, particularly from a loan made by the Union's Farmworker Fund to the Service Center, the UFW's property management division.

Most residents seem glad to be a part of the center. When asked where they might be living if the center didn't exist, most said their circumstances would be greatly reduced.

Florida. The Concerned Citizens of Collier County (CCCC), a nonprofit community-service organization in southern Florida, has been working for several years to develop a congregate facility for elderly persons who are retired from farmwork. CCCC has received a donated 40-acre tract in Imokalee, Florida, which will be used for the congregate project and several other related efforts. Habitat for

Farmworker housing near Imokalee, Florida: focus of the Concerned Citizens of Collier County.

Humanity, a nonprofit self-help organization, will construct houses for moderate- and low-income persons on the largest portion of the tract. The county's Guadalupe Social Services will use another parcel for a community center, and several other related uses will occupy the remaining acres.

Thus far, CCCC has been unable to secure the Community Development Block Grant funding needed to develop the site. CCCC's present goal is to obtain the block grant funds in 1988, then proceed with the planned project.

There are also several other Florida groups interested in housing for older farmworkers. The one closest to developing a project is the nonprofit housing group, Neighbors Organized For Adequate Housing (NOAH), in Belle Glade. Palm Beach County has allocated $5 million for housing-related activity in the area, and NOAH has assembled staff, land and assistance in putting together a bond issue. NOAH is interested in the housing needs of older farmworkers and has plans to put a Section 202 project in Belle Glade as part of its overall efforts. NOAH staffers are interested in looking at ways to include older people in the 131-unit complex they hope to build.

Texas. The Texas Farmworkers Union (TFU) has for several years been developing plans to sponsor one or more retirement communities. The union is interested in developing housing for older farmworkers on union-owned land in Harlingen and on land between McAllen and Pharr. It hopes to build small duplex units, each with a bedroom, bath and living room/kitchen, that would be affordable to retired farmworkers. Because union members will undertake construction, with subcontracts for only the electrical work, the only costs incurred will be for site improvements and construction.

A local bank has indicated to TFU an interest in providing permanent financing on favorable terms for the TFU project. HAC has indicated to TFU that construction financing might be available from HAC loan funds. TFU plans to apply for a loan to be considered by HAC's loan committee.

TFU calculates that it can build six duplexes (12 units) for a total cost of only $69,000 (or $5,750 per unit). The interested bank is tentatively prepared to lend this amount at ten percent interest for 15 years, yielding a monthly payment of $62 per unit. At 12 percent interest for 15 years, monthly payments would be $69. TFU estimates that total housing costs, including utilities, would be $100 to $125 per month. No services such as meals or housekeeping are planned.

Costs of retirement housing can be reduced by using volunteer time of the residents in performing maintenence and repairs.

VICTOR ALEMAN/COURTESY OF UFW

Farmworker housing: Tevlston, California.

TFU also plans to reduce the cost of this housing by using the volunteer time of the residents. They propose to require each resident to contribute approximately ten hours per month to answer telephones and do other light office tasks for the union. Experienced union members would be on call to help with maintenance problems and repair of the project. In addition, a small amount of each tenant's monthly rent payment would go into a pool for future electrical or other work union members could not perform.

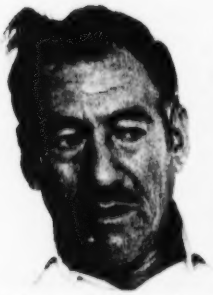
One of TFU's spin-off organizations, Salud y Educacion por El Campesino de Texas, Inc., has produced a planning document calling for "a rural, energy-efficient, rental, self-reliant retirement community" in the Rio Grande Valley. According to this report,

> The retirement community will attempt to accommodate 20-40 aged adults with incomes below poverty level, whose work background and cultural consciousness warrant a communal design with energy conserving accommodations.
>
> [The] main objective in the design of this retirement community is to give the elderly farmworker the possibility of having decent housing and a room for their grandchildren, so that they can provide care for them, temporarily, while the parents are working ... (17)

The unusual concept of providing an additional room for visiting grandchildren is based on TFU's sensitivity to farmworker traditions.

5.

Design Features in Congregate Housing for Older Farmworkers



VICTOR ALEMAN/COURTESY OF UFW

Older farmworker: Napa, California.

Congregate housing is one possible solution for the housing needs of retired farmworkers. This chapter covers selected design features that should be included in such a congregate project. Several factors are important: projects should include common space areas; unit designs should incorporate ease of accessibility and use for residents; cultural factors must be recognized; and costs should be kept to a minimum.

Congregate projects for farmworkers differ in some ways from proprietary congregate housing in that all the residents would share a common employment history. Because the older population in each farmworker community is relatively small, the projects would be small in size and could be established with a sense of community. Some residents are likely to know each other before taking up congregate occupancy. There also may be some recreational and cultural considerations. For example, in the California-based Agbiyani Center, there is ample space around the building for gardens, parking and animal pens, as the Agbiyani residents are very interested in gardening, collecting and working on automobiles and raising chickens. (See chapter 4).

Design concepts should also attempt to make congregate projects as "homelike" as possible, by providing an opportunity for socializing and for privacy. Particularly important are designs -- such as parking lots and ample common-rooms -- which take into account residents' desires for visits from their families.

As with any housing project for low- and moderate-income individuals, congregate development and management costs are an important consideration. Holding down such costs is particularly important in an era of fiscal austerity. For

cost reasons and reasons of simplicity, it may be useful to follow FmHA guidelines for congregate projects. For example, construction should be economical and not use extravagant plans or excessively expensive materials. For the most part, projects should also be one or two stories to save expenses for elevators, and individual units should be relatively compact in size.

Congregate housing requires attention to certain design features particularly in the bathroom and kitchen. Wheelchair access is important, as are safety features such as handles and grab bars for help in pulling oneself up, steadying oneself and walking. For retired farmworkers, stooping and bending to reach low shelves or cabinets may be difficult, due to muscular or skeletal ailments developed during a life of stoop labor. Thus, low cabinets and drawers should be kept to a minimum.

A prototype. In keeping with these economic, cultural and physical considerations, HAC has developed a prototype design consisting of a rectangular structure, with 18 individual and two double units facing onto two open courtyards. Ten single units surround one courtyard on three sides. Eight singles and the two double units surround the other courtyard. The double units have private baths. The single rooms have shared commodes between two units, and there are four bath/showers. Eight single units share two bath/showers in the upper courtyard, while ten units in the lower courtyard share the other two bath/showers (see Figure A).

In the center of the complex, dividing the two courtyards, are the main hall, kitchen, storage and maintenance areas, and a caretaker's apartment.

The main hall is for dining, recreation, meetings and other general purposes. At one end is a sitting/reading/ television area. Costs permitting, a fireplace can be a pleasant addition for this area. At the other end of the main hall, abutting the kitchen and cafeteria-style food service area, are dining tables which can serve other functions at non-meal times. The main hall is centrally located to allow ease of access for all tenants. Its walls, facing into the courtyards, should consist entirely of windows. This will allow light into the hall and provide a sense of spaciousness through the length of the project.

Around the perimeter of the courtyards, hallways lead from rooms to the baths and the main hall. In warm climates, these hallways could be covered but open on the sides.

The enclosed courtyard is a popular architectural style in Mexico and other Spanish-speaking countries. This style may prove familiar and comfortable to some retired farmworkers of Hispanic origin. In keeping with this style, it might prove useful to incorporate a tile roof and white, stucco exterior walls. This approach should also readily fit into surrounding neighborhoods in the southwestern United States.

The HAC project would cost an estimated $315,000 for total acquisition and construction expense, or $15,750 per unit. This estimate is based on a cost of $39 per square foot for the $8,064 square foot project (with dimensions of 84 by 96 feet). The $39 cost figure is arrived at through comparison to other projects. For example, a recent non-elderly farm labor housing project planned by a nonprofit group and submitted to HAC for loan consideration cost $687,000. The project's 17,630 square feet meant a cost of $39 per foot (see Appendix B).

Other Designs. The HAC prototype envisions new construction. Another option is to rehabilitate a facility. Figures B and C are plans for an attractive and well-designed congregate facilities in Massachusetts. These projects have made use of historic buildings which might otherwise have been abandoned or destroyed. The building in Figure B, the Peter Bulkeley project, was constructed in 1911 as the Peter Bulkeley school.

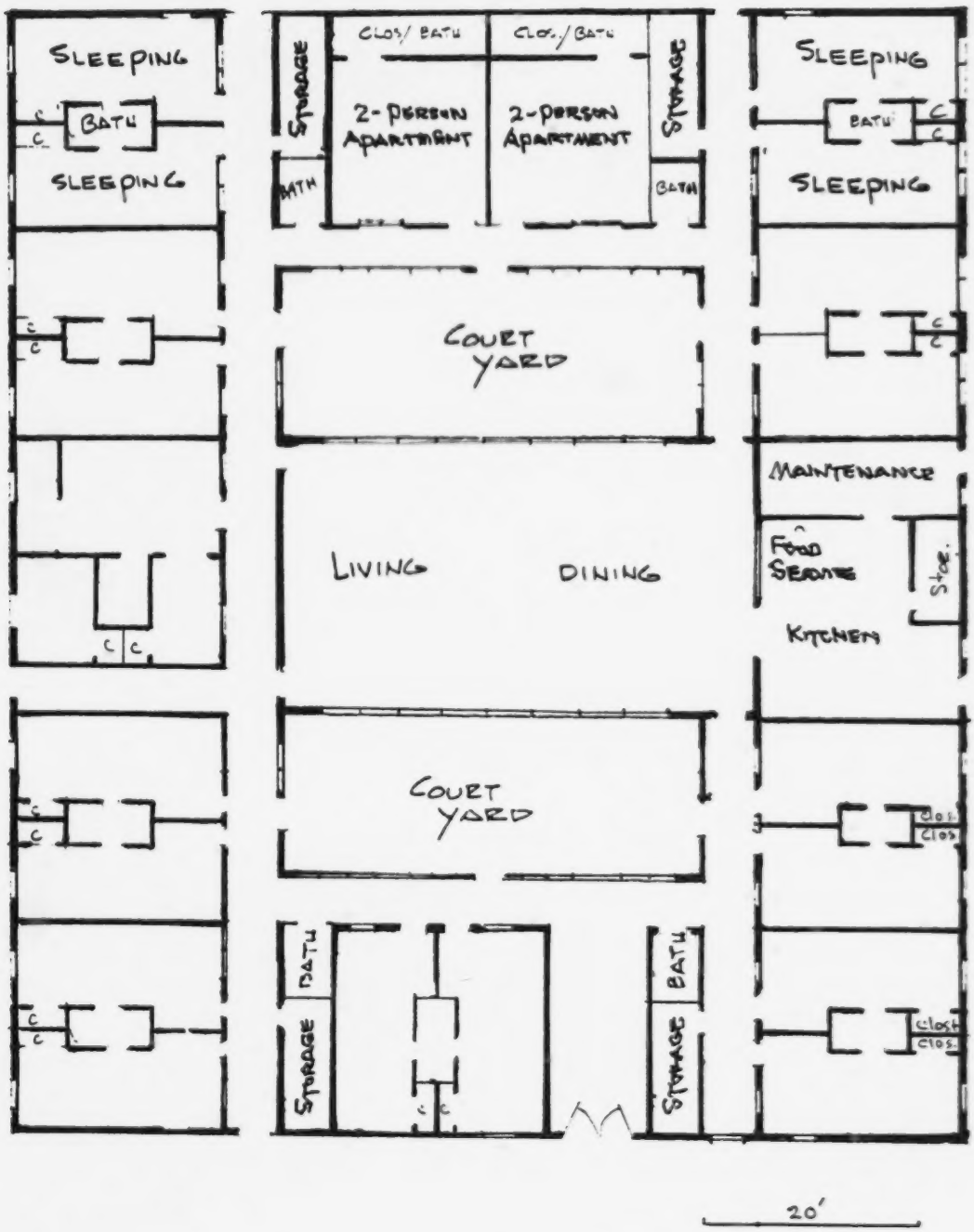
The project in Figure C is an older house with a substantial addition. The addition was built specifically to enlarge the original house into a congregate facility. Both these Massachusetts projects may be too expensive for the relatively limited resources which will, in most cases, be available for farmworker congregate housing. However, the Massachusetts projects do contain elements that would prove useful in any low- to moderate-income congregate housing. For example, shared baths and single rooms rather than apartments will be more economical.

Other designs for older farmworker housing are also included in this report. The Agbiyani Center complex in California -- Figure D -- has units in two wings radiating out from a central kitchen, dining and sitting rooms. Tenants have private rooms with a bath shared between every two rooms.

The Collier County, Florida, plan -- Figure E -- envisions a 12-unit congregate facility with shared baths, an enclosed courtyard, and a caretaker's apartment.

FIGURE A:

Plan for Farmworker Congregate Housing



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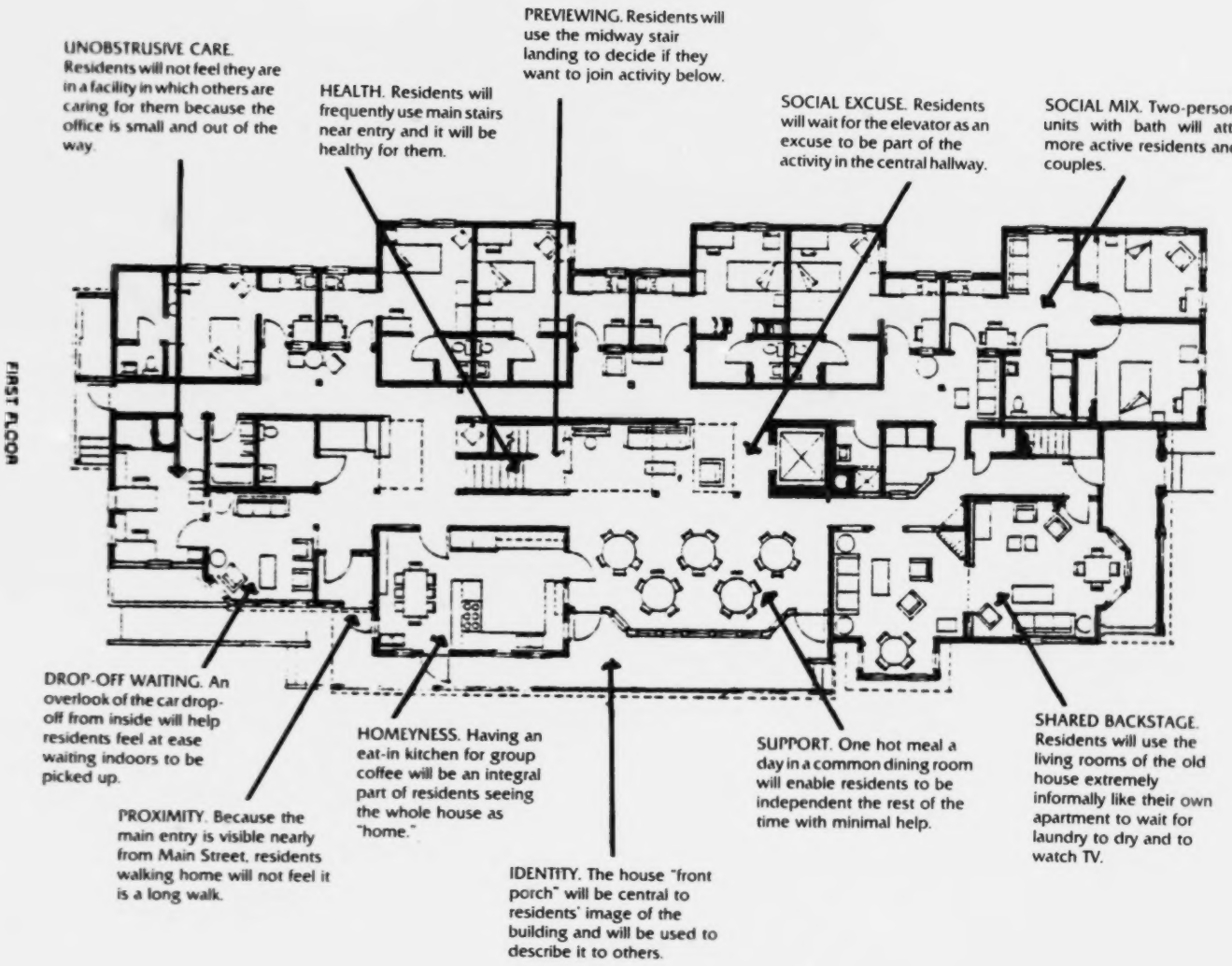

UNOBSTRUSIVE CARE. Residents will not feel they are in a facility in which others are caring for them because the office is small and out of the way.
HEALTH. Residents will frequently use main stairs near entry and it will be healthy for them.
PREVIEWING. Residents will use the midway stair landing to decide if they want to join activity below.
SOCIAL EXCUSE. Residents will wait for the elevator as an excuse to be part of the activity in the central hallway.
SOCIAL MIX. Two-person units with bath will attract more active residents and couples.
FIRST FLOOR
DROP-OFF WAITING. An overlook of the car drop-off from inside will help residents feel at ease waiting indoors to be picked up.
PROXIMITY. Because the main entry is visible nearly from Main Street, residents walking home will not feel it is a long walk.
HOMEYNESS. Having an eat-in kitchen for group coffee will be an integral part of residents seeing the whole house as "home."
IDENTITY. The house "front porch" will be central to residents' image of the building and will be used to describe it to others.
SUPPORT. One hot meal a day in a common dining room will enable residents to be independent the rest of the time with minimal help.
SHARED BACKSTAGE. Residents will use the living rooms of the old house extremely informally like their own apartment to wait for laundry to dry and to watch TV.

FIGURE B:
Plan for Congregate Housing, Hyannis, Massachusetts

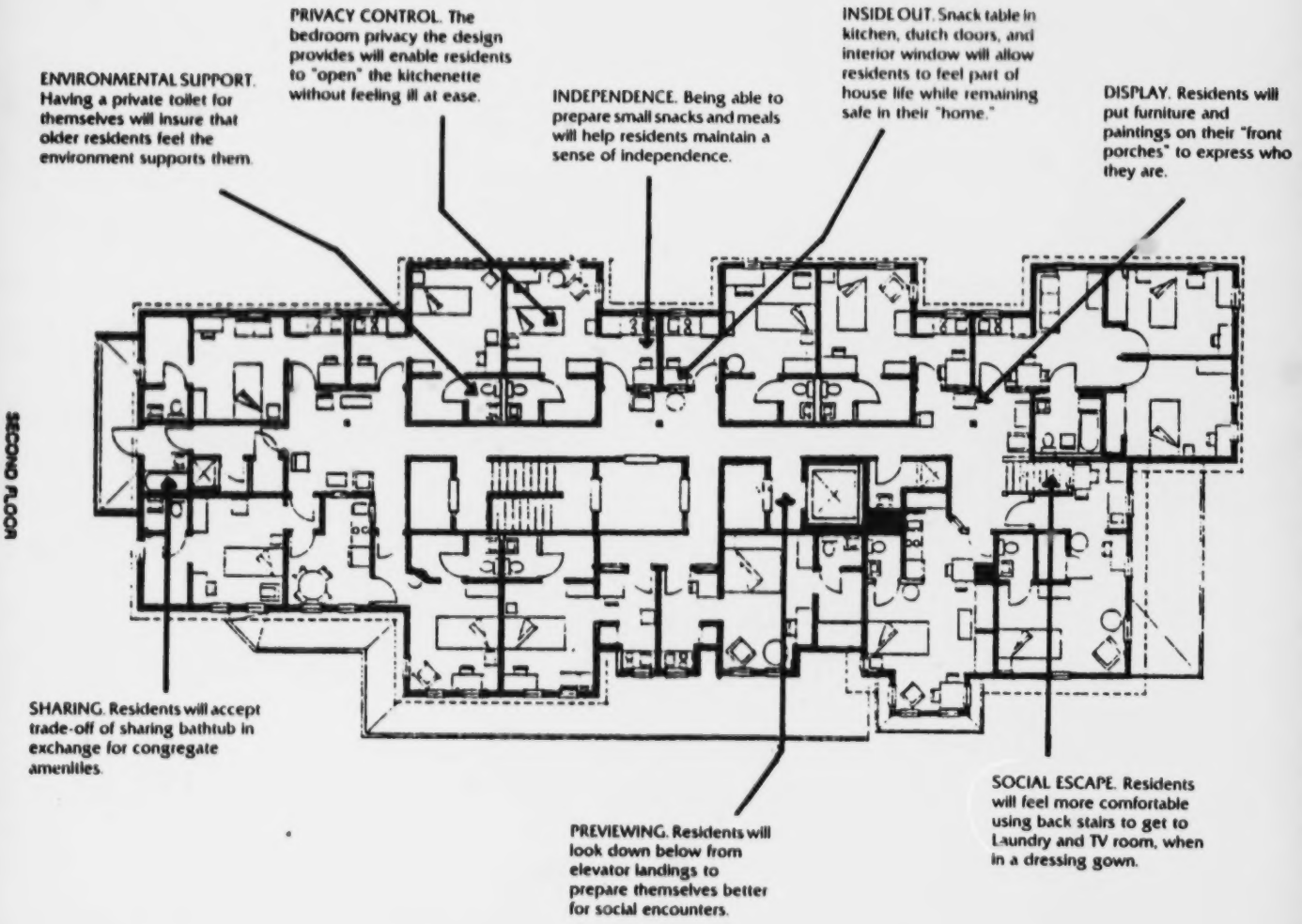

ENVIRONMENTAL SUPPORT. Having a private toilet for themselves will insure that older residents feel the environment supports them.
PRIVACY CONTROL. The bedroom privacy the design provides will enable residents to "open" the kitchenette without feeling ill at ease.
INDEPENDENCE. Being able to prepare small snacks and meals will help residents maintain a sense of independence.
INSIDE OUT. Snack table in kitchen, dutch doors, and interior window will allow residents to feel part of house life while remaining safe in their "home."
DISPLAY. Residents will put furniture and paintings on their "front porches" to express who they are.
SECOND FLOOR
SHARING. Residents will accept trade-off of sharing bathtub in exchange for congregate amenities.
PREVIEWING. Residents will look down below from elevator landings to prepare themselves better for social encounters.
SOCIAL ESCAPE. Residents will feel more comfortable using back stairs to get to Laundry and TV room, when in a dressing gown.

FIGURE C:

Plan for Peter Bulkeley Congregate Elderly Housing, Concord, Massachusetts

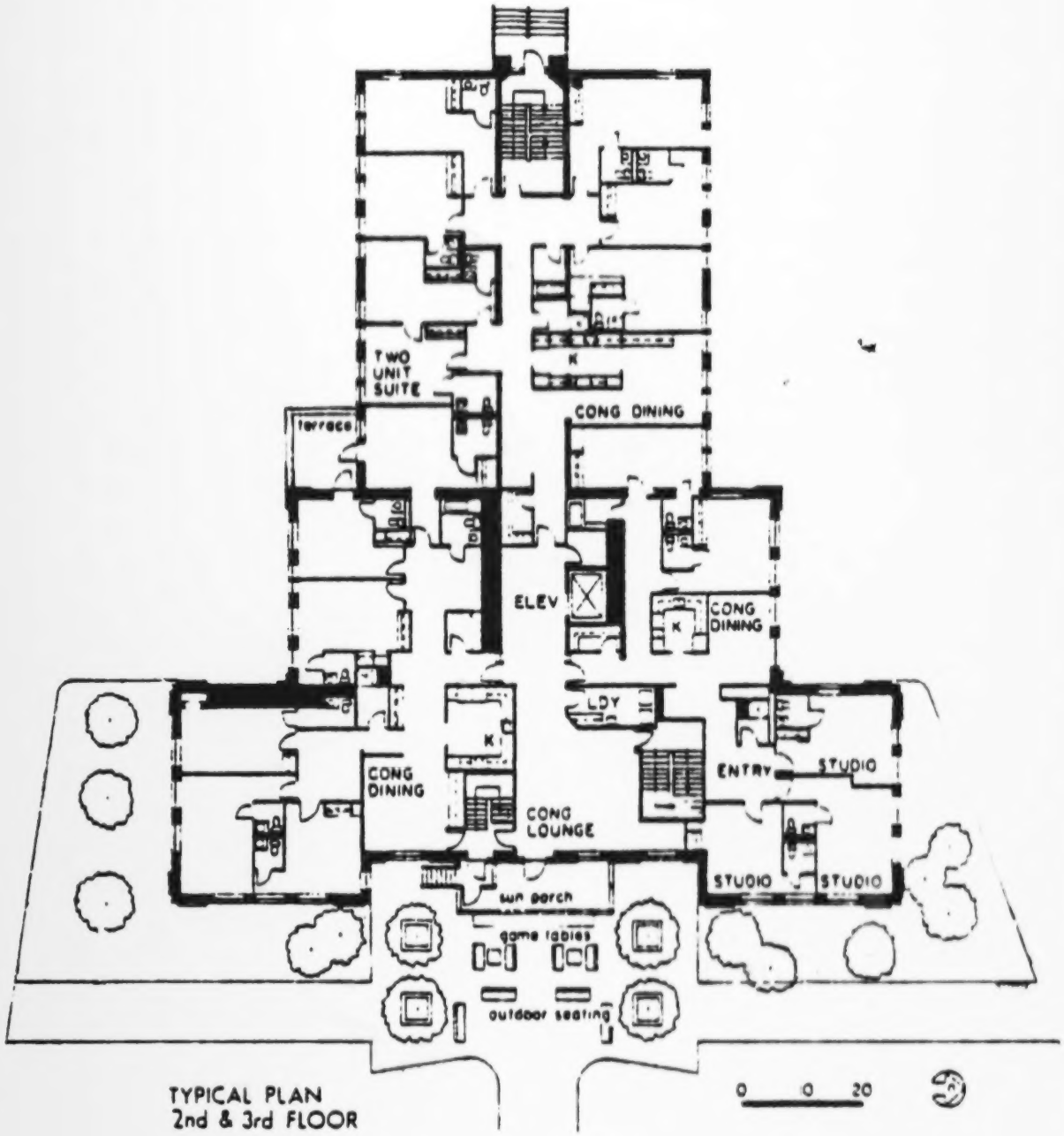


FIGURE D:

Paulo Agbiyani Center,
Delano, California

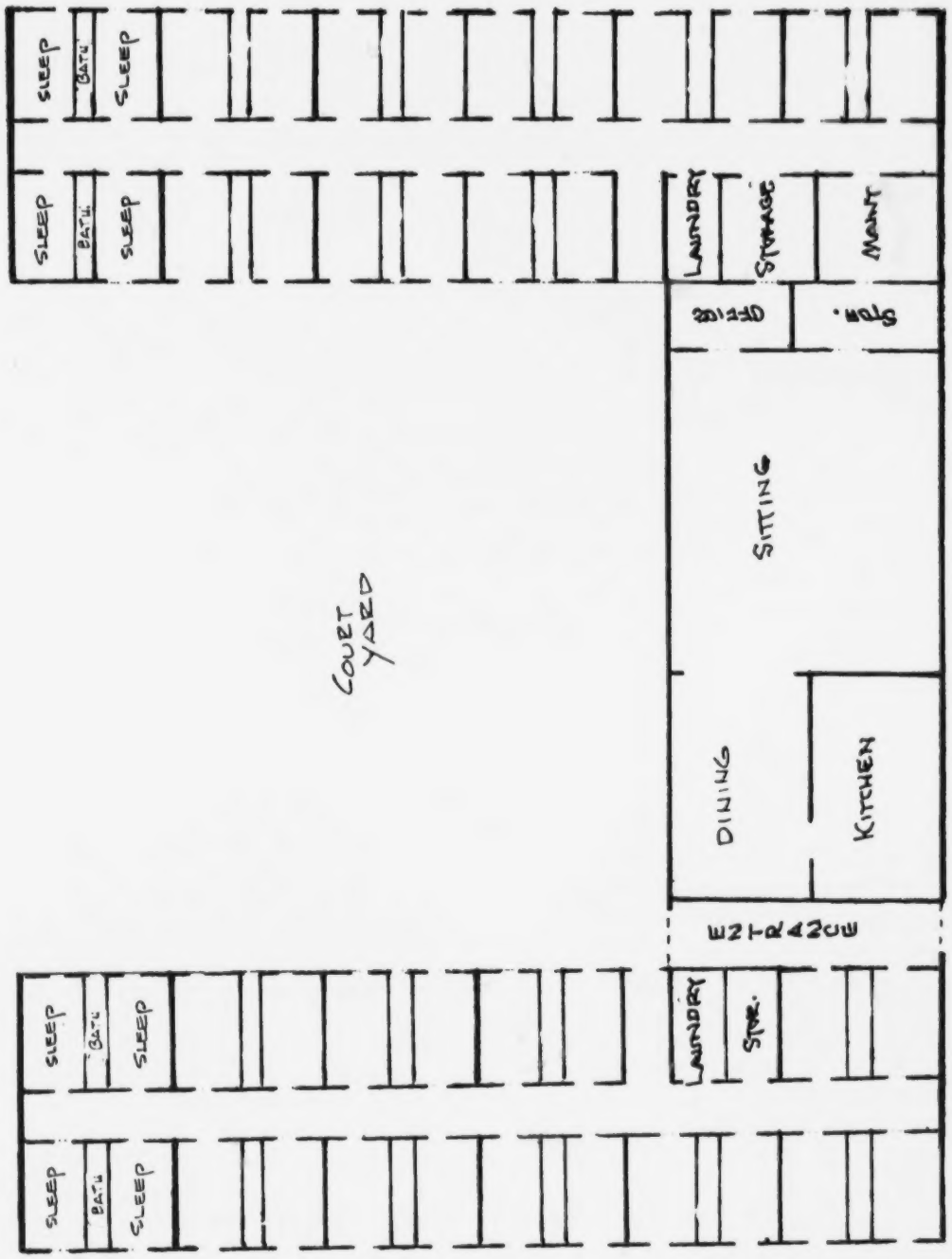
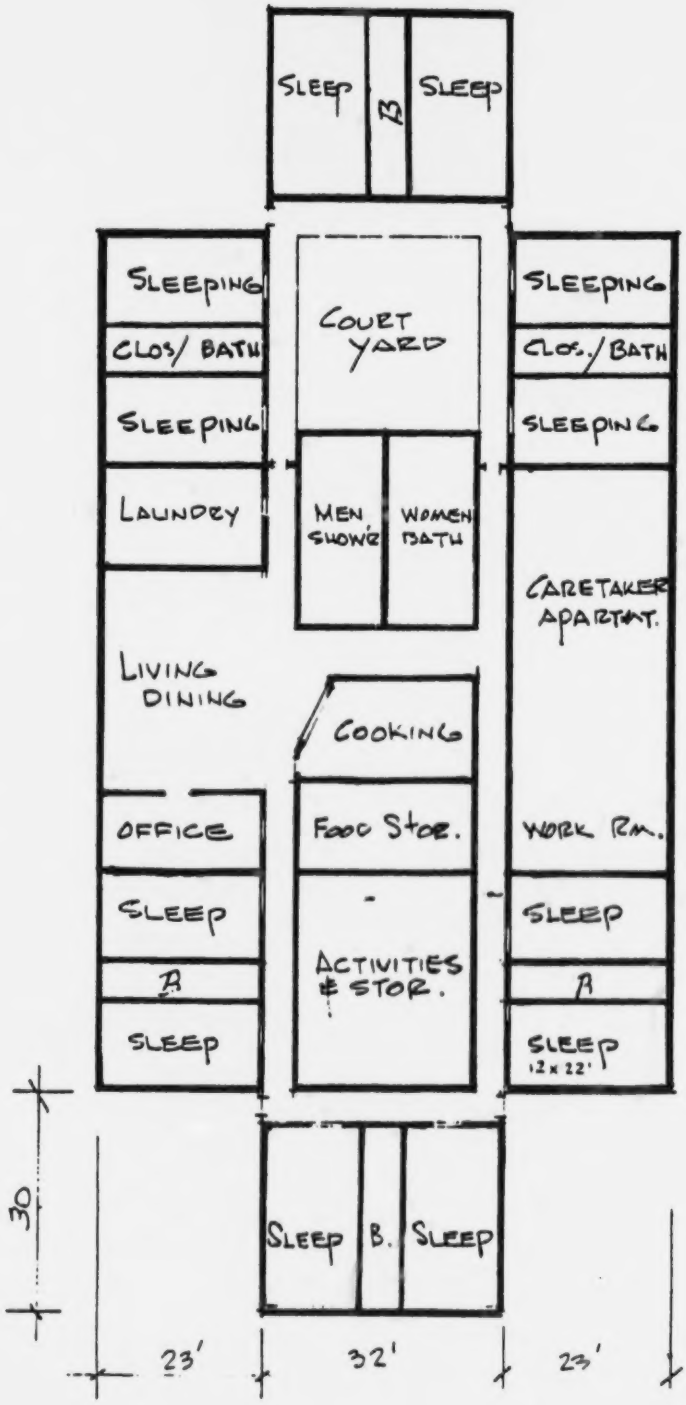


FIGURE E:
Project Imokalee,
Imokalee, Florida



6.

Recommendations and Conclusion

'Providing housing for older farmworkers is usually a low or non-existent priority.'

As has been documented in this report, farmworkers are a population faced with serious problems. Many face hardships such as toxic drinking water, malnutrition, low education and income levels, and poor health care. Farmworkers focus most of their energy on surviving today, not on planning for tomorrow. For many housing is a luxury item and decent housing is often inconceivable.

Unfortunately, providing housing for older and retired farmworkers is usually a low or non-existent priority for government and farmworker groups. But after a lifetime of toil, older farmworkers need to be a priority. Their problems are characteristic of the entire farmworker community, whose plight is unknown by most Americans.

The difficult question is: How can decent housing be provided to older farmworkers when intolerable conditions are faced by nearly all farmworkers? The answer lies in gaining a better understanding of how older farmworkers' problems relate to all farmworkers, and how these problems can be solved collectively. To promote better understanding the following advocacy initiatives are recommended:

Information. The attention of the general public, the media and policy makers can be drawn to the plight of older or retired farmworkers. For example, the broadcast and print media can be urged to examine the issues concerning older farmworkers.

In 1982, media exposure concerning the effects of the citrus-fruit freeze brought about public pressure for improvements in farmworker living conditions. However, the need for assistance was only partially met and should again be forcefully impressed upon policymakers. The July 1986 hearing on farmworkers before the House Select Committee on Hunger, while not focusing specifically on the elderly, was

a useful step. Congressional hearings might reveal important policy strategies, and other nonprofit farmworker, housing, and aging organizations could participate in hearings, calling for greater Congressional attention to the problems of older farmworkers.

State and Local Government. State and local policymakers should also be made aware of these issues. The Kentucky Housing Corporation (KHC), for example, has set up a $1 billion housing trust fund to make low-interest loans to low-income persons. The fund has made grants to help the low-income elderly make energy-saving home improvements, and released $1.2 million to subsidize salaries of Vietnam veterans hired to work in low-income housing construction. (18)

Technical Assistance. Efforts should continue to help local organizations build housing for retired farmworkers. The UFW project in California is an excellent model for a housing project. There are several groups in Texas, Florida and elsewhere that are capable of and interested in developing projects. Technical assistance should be designed to help leverage both public and private financial sources.

Financial support. HAC, which has been making rural housing loans since 1972, can provide predevelopment loans to qualified projects for older-farmworker housing. In addition, other public and private financial sources can be examined. For example, HAC often makes compensating deposits of its funds in local banks and thus persuades these banks to lend to local nonprofit developers. HUD Section 202 direct loans are another source of funds, as is the FmHA's rural rental and congregate housing program.

Rental Versus Owner-Occupied Housing. The projects envisioned in this report are rental, but serious consideration should be given to developing resources for owner-occupants who are either elderly farmworkers or whose families include elderly farmworkers. Resources could include rehabilitation assistance, subsidies for "ECHO" or "granny flat" units, or support for nonprofit organizations engaged in packaging applications for federal government rehabilitation and new construction subsidies.

A Conference. This issue would benefit from a conference or meeting of experts and advocates on farmworker housing, the elderly and other relevant interests. Their exchange of information and ideas could help further the goal of providing help to older farmworkers by clarifying the basic issues, starting a dialogue, identifying common problems and areas of agreement, and proposing an agenda for future action.

Heathcare. In addition to serious housing deficiencies, older farmworkers face health problems common to other older persons. This segment of the older population is also more susceptible to illnesses such as respiratory diseases, problems due to pesticide exposure, work-related accidents, and bone, joint, and muscular problems. Judging by the low rate of medical attention received by this group, federal, state, and private-sector efforts are needed to study older farmworkers health needs, and problems, increase health care services, and if necessary, broaden eligibility for health care reimbursement.

Conclusion

The measure of a just society is found in its treatment of the least fortunate among its members. In late 20th-century America, the very young and the very old remain at the top of any list of our most disadvantaged and vulnerable citizens. Among occupational groups, farmworkers have always been severely disadvantaged. Thus, when "farmworker" and "elderly" are combined, it is abundantly clear that we are describing a group of people who are often very much in need of help. They are also a group that has been mostly out of sight and out of mind. That can and should be changed.

Notes*

(1) USDA, A Time to Choose: Summary Report on the Structure of Agriculture. Washington, D.C. 1981, p. 133.

(2) U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Abstracts of the U.S.: 1985, p. 27.

(3) U.S. Executive Office of the President, Economic Report of the President.

(4) The prevalence of hypertension, coronary heart disease, hypertensive heart disease, ulcer, hernia, gall bladder disease, and emphysema is all higher in rural places, Kane, "Problems in Rural Health Care."

(5) U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Characteristics of the Population Below the Poverty Level.

(6) See Housing Assistance Council, Taking Stock and High-Poverty Counties in the United States.

(7) In 1983 (the latest year for which complete statistics are available), there were 58.7 million occupied housing units in urban areas of the United States. Of these, 41.3 percent were rental units. But of the 25.9 million rural occupied units in 1983, only 21.6 percent were rental. U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Annual Housing Survey: 1983, p. E-1 and U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

(8) Ten sites were chosen for demonstrations:

* Riverside County, California
* Decatur County, Iowa
* Lake County, Michigan
* Claiborne County, Mississippi
* Carroll County, New Hampshire
* Sierra County, New Mexico
* Chautauqua County, New York
* Baker County, Oregon
* Charles Mix County, South Dakota
* Accomac County, Virginia

* Footnotes cited are taken from publications listed in the bibliography.

(9) Cronin et al, An Evaluation of the FmHA-AoA Demonstration Program, pp. 66, 215, 265-268, 1983.

(10) The Hired Farmworking Force study has been used in this report because it is the most readily available and detailed analysis of agricultural workers. Pollack, The Hired Farm Force of 1983.

(11) Lillesand et al, An Estimate of the Number of Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers.

(12) Cortes, Handicapped Migrant Farmworkers.

(13) The 25 states included Arkansas, Delaware, Iowa, Kansas Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Missouri, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Vermont, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin and Wyoming.

(14) For more detailed information, see Housing Assistance Council, Taking Stock, High-Poverty Counties in the United States.

(15) Texas Rural Legal Aid, Farmworkers and Workers Compensation p. 3.

(16) Miller and Maril, Poverty in the Lower Rio Grande Valley of Texas.

(17) Texas Farmworkers Union, Building A Self-Reliant Community.

(18) Herbers, "States Forced Into Lead on Housing for the Poor," New York Times.

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Appendix A: Tables

Table 1
Elderly Persons Below Poverty Level*, 1983

Race or Ethnic Group	Persons Age 65 & Over Below Poverty Level			
	All Areas		Nonmetro Areas	
	Number (1000s)	Poverty Rate (Percent)	Number (1000s)	Poverty Rate (Percent)
Total	3711	14.1	1681	17.8
White	2860	12.0	1329	15.2
Black	796	36.3	333	49.5
Hispanic	645	23.1	114	26.7

* $4775/year for single elderly person.

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census

Table 2
Hired Farmworkers, by Selected Age Groups, 1983

Age	All Farmworkers		Migrants	
	Total	Percent	Total	Percent
	(Numbers in 1000s)			
Total, All Ages	2,595	100	226	100
Ages				
45-54	197	8	41	18
55-64	168	6	7	3
65 & Over	80	3	7	3

Source: Susan L. Pollack, The Hired Farm Working Force of 1983: A Statistical Profile, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service, Ag. Econ. Rept. No. 554, June 1986, pp. 10, 14.

Table 3

Hired Farmworkers, by Race and Selected Age Groups, 1983

Age	Total	Whites	Hispanics	Blacks and Others
		(In 1,000s)		
All Farmworkers	2,595	1,888	331	376
Ages				
45-54	197	102	41	54
55-64	168	108	24	36
65 & Over	80	60	3	17
Nonfarm Residence	2,183	1,542	294	347
Ages				
45-54	155	69	37	49
55-64	133	73	24	36
65 & Over	65	48	3	14
		(In Percentages)		
All Farmworkers	100	100	100	100
Ages				
45-54	8	5	12	14
55-64	6	6	7	10
65 & Over	3	3	1	4
Nonfarm Residence	100	100	100	100
Ages				
45-54	6	4	11	13
55-64	5	4	7	10
65 & Over	3	3	1	4

Source: Susan L. Pollack, The Hired Farm Working Force of 1983: A Statistical Profile, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service, Ag. Econ. Rept. No. 554, June 1986, pp. 14-15.

Table 4

Hired Farmworkers, by Race, Sex and Selected Age Groups, 1983

Residence and Age	Total		Whites		Hispanics		Blacks and Others	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
			(In 1,000s)					
All Farmworkers	2,017	578	1,510	378	239	91	268	108
Ages								
45-54	153	44	79	24	31	9	43	11
55-64	114	54	79	30	20	3	15	21
65 & Over	72	8	54	6	2	1	15	1
Nonfarm Residence	1,687	497	1,228	313	208	87	251	97
Ages								
45-54	117	38	51	18	28	9	39	11
55-64	85	48	50	24	20	3	15	21
65 & Over	59	6	43	5	2	1	14	0
			(In Percentages)					
All Farmworkers	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Ages								
45-54	8	8	5	6	13	10	16	10
55-64	6	9	5	8	9	4	6	20
65 & Over	4	1	4	1	1	1	6	1
Nonfarm Residence	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Ages								
45-54	6	7	3	5	12	10	14	10
55-64	4	8	3	6	9	4	6	20
65 & Over	3	1	3	1	1	1	5	0

Source: Susan L. Pollack, The Hired Farm Working Force of 1983, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service, Ag. Econ. Rept. No. 554, June 1986, pp. 16-17.

Table 5

Hired Farmworkers, by Days Worked for Selected Age Groups, 1983

Age	Hired Farmworkers					
		Days Worked				
	Total	Less Than 25	25-74	75-149	150-249	250 or More
	(In 1,000s)					
Ages						
45-54	197	40	18	50	48	41
55-64	168	47	23	21	42	35
65 & Over	80	40	21	0	6	13
	(In Percentages)					
Ages						
45-54	100	20	9	25	24	21
55-64	100	27	14	13	25	21
65 & Over	100	50	26	-	8	16

Source: Susan L. Pollack, The Hired Farm Working Force of 1983, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service, Ag. Econ. Rept. No. 554, June 1986, p. 24.

Table 6

Hired Farmworkers, by Days Worked and Sex for Selected Age Groups, 1983

Age	Hired Farmworkers					
		Days Worked				
	Total	Less Than 25	25-74	75-149	150-249	250 or More
	(In 1,000s)					
Male						
Ages						
45-54	153	27	9	36	43	37
55-64	114	29	15	14	24	32
65 & Over	72	35	21	0	4	12
Female						
Ages						
45-54	44	13	8	14	5	3
55-64	54	18	8	7	19	3
65 & Over	8	5	0	0	1	1
	(In Percentages)					
Male						
Ages						
45-54	100	18	6	24	28	24
55-64	100	25	13	12	21	28
65 & Over	100	48	29	0	6	17
Female						
Ages						
45-54	100	-	-	-	-	-
55-64	100	33	14	14	34	6
65 & Over	100	-	-	-	-	-

- = Base of fewer than 50,000 persons.

Source: Susan L. Pollock, The Hired Farm Working Force of 1983: A Statistical Profile, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service, Ag. Econ. Rept. No. 554, June 1986, pp. 24-25.

Table 7

Hired Farmworkers, Who Did Less Than 25 Days of Farmwork, by Race and Selected Age Groups, 1983

Residence and Age in Years	Total	Whites	Hispanics	Blacks and Others
		(In Thousands)		
All Farmworkers	973	816	66	91
Ages				
45-54	40	33	4	4
55-64	46	35	3	8
65 & Over	40	26	1	13
Nonfarm Residence	862	712	64	86
Ages				
45-54	26	19	4	4
55-64	40	28	3	8
65 & Over	38	24	1	13
		(In Percentages)		
All Farmworkers	100	100	100	100
Ages				
45-54	4	4	6	4
55-64	5	4	5	9
65 & Over	4	3	2	14
Nonfarm Residence	100	100	100	100
Ages				
45-54	3	2	6	4
55-64	4	3	5	9
65 & Over	4	3	2	14

Source: Susan L. Pollock, The Hired Farm Working Force of 1983: A Statistical Profile, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service, Ag. Econ. Rept. No. 554, June 1986, pp. 20-21.

Table 8

Hired Farmworkers, Who Did 25 to 149 Days of Farmwork, by Race and Selected Age Groups, 1983

Residence and Age in Years	Total	Whites	Hispanics	Blacks and Others
		(In Thousands)		
All Farmworkers	888	592	140	156
Ages				
45-54	68	24	16	28
55-64	44	31	9	4
65 & Over	21	18	2	1
Nonfarm Residence	764	488	133	144
Ages				
45-54	61	18	16	28
55-64	41	27	9	4
65 & Over	17	14	2	1
		(In Percentages)		
All Farmworkers	100	100	100	100
Ages				
45-54	8	4	11	18
55-64	5	5	6	3
65 & Over	2	3	2	0
Nonfarm Residence	100	100	100	100
Ages				
45-54	7	3	11	18
55-64	5	5	6	3
65 & Over	2	2	2	0

Source: Susan L. Pollock, The Hired Farm Working Force of 1983: A Statistical Profile, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service, Ag. Econ. Rept. No. 554, June 1986, pp. 20-21.

Table 9

Hired Farmworkers, Who Did 150 or More Days of Farmwork, by Race and Selected Age Groups, 1983

Residence and Age in Years	Total	Whites	Hispanics	Blacks and Others
		(In Thousands)		
All Farmworkers	735	481	125	128
Ages				
45-54	89	46	21	22
55-64	78	43	12	24
65 & Over	19	15	0	4
Nonfarm Residence	557	342	97	117
Ages				
45-54	68	32	18	18
55-64	53	18	12	24
65 & Over	10	10	0	1
		(In Percentages)		
All Farmworkers	100	100	100	100
Ages				
45-54	12	9	17	17
55-64	11	9	9	18
65 & Over	3	3	0	3
Nonfarm Residence	100	100	100	100
Ages				
45-54	9	7	14	14
55-64	7	4	9	18
65 & Over	1	2	0	1

Source: Susan L. Pollock, The Hired Farm Working Force of 1983: A Statistical Profile, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service, Ag. Econ. Rept. No. 554, June 1986, pp. 20-21.

Table 10

Annual Farm Earnings of Hired Farmworkers, by Selected Age Groups, 1983

	Workers (In 1,000s)	Annual Farm Earnings								
		Fewer Than $500	$500 to $999	$1000 to $2499	$2500 to $3999	$4000 to $5499	$5500 to $7499	$7500 to $9999	$10,000 and Over	Median Earnings
	Number	Percent								Dollars
All Workers	2,595	36	11	16	10	6	6	6	9	1,021
Age										
45-54	197	19	7	7	18	9	17	8	14	3,997
55-64	168	26	5	19	4	7	8	20	11	2,858
65 & Over	80	47	14	22	5	2	0	0	9	622

Source: Susan L. Pollack, The Hired Farm Working Force of 1983: A Statistical Profile, USDA, ERS, Ag. Econ. Rept. No. 554, June 1986, p. 36.

Table 11

Total Annual Earnings of Hired Farmworkers, by Selected Age Groups, 1983

	Workers (In 1,000s)	Annual Earnings: Fewer Than $500	$500 to $999	$1000 to $2499	$2500 to $3999	$4000 to $5499	$5500 to $7499	$7500 to $9999	$10,000 and Over	Median Earnings
	Number	Percent								Dollars
All Workers	2,595	21	9	17	11	9	9	8	17	2,901
Age										
45-54	197	12	6	9	11	17	17	9	20	5,291
55-64	168	17	2	19	8	10	8	22	14	4,470
65 & Over	80	43	15	23	8	2	0	0	9	962

Source: Susan L. Pollack, The Hired Farm Working Force of 1983: A Statistical Profile, USDA, ERS, Ag. Econ. Rept. No. 554, June 1986, p. 34.

Table 12

Educational Attainment of Total Population and Hispanics, by Age and Residence, 1979

Age and Location	Years of School Completed			
	Male		Female	
	Less Than 5 Years	4 Years High School or More	Less Than 5 Years	4 Years High School or More
	(Percent)			
25-44 Years				
Total Population	1.4	82.6	1.3	80.5
Metropolitan	1.3	84.3	1.2	82.2
Nonmetropolitan	1.5	78.8	1.3	76.7
Hispanic	12.3	49.8	10.7	50.6
Metropolitan	11.8	49.9	10.2	50.9
Nonmetropolitan	15.3	49.0	14.0	48.7
45 Years & Over				
Total Population	5.9	55.1	4.8	56.0
Metropolitan	4.7	59.6	4.2	58.8
Nonmetropolitan	8.2	46.6	6.1	50.4
Hispanic	26.6	30.4	28.2	27.6
Metropolitan	23.2	33.1	26.0	29.0
Nonmetropolitan	43.3	17.0	40.0	19.5

Source: Frank Fratoe, The Education of Nonmetro Hispanics, USDA, ERS, 1981.

Table 13

Income and Other Sources of Support for Older and Retired Farmworkers

How many older farmworkers in your area...	Percent of Responding Organizations						
	All	Almost All	Over Half	About Half	Less Than Half	Almost None	None
	(Percent)						
Have nonfarm earnings?	8	8	13	-	25	42	4
Receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI)?	4	22	4	30	9	30	-
Receive Social Security?	4	17	21	25	8	21	4
Receive food stamps?	16	28	24	8	20	4	-
Receive Medicaid?	9	22	39	9	13	9	-
Are Eligible for Medicare?	10	20	35	25	-	10	-
Live in subsidized housing?	-	4	4	9	22	48	13

Source: Housing Assistance Council, Older Farmworker Survey, 1986.

Table 14

Health Problems of Older and Retired Farmworkers

How many older farmworkers in your area have...	Percent of Responding Organizations						
	All	Almost All	Over Half	About Half	Less Than Half	Almost None	None
				(Percent)			
Respiratory or lung problems?	-	-	16	26	42	11	5
Circulatory or heart problems?	-	17	17	17	44	5	-
Problems due to pesticide exposure?	-	6	18	23	35	12	6
Digestive problems?	-	6	6	41	35	6	6
Problems due to work-related accidents?	-	-	12	6	47	29	6
Bone, joint or muscular problems?	-	24	29	12	35	-	-
Mental or emotional problems?	-	-	17	17	22	33	11

Source: Housing Assistance Council, Older Farmworker Survey, 1986.

Table 15

Persons Employed in Farmwork, Age 55 and Over, U.S., 1980

Persons Employed in Farmwork	55 to 64 Years of Age	65 Years and Over
Whites	83,400	81,500
Blacks	18,800	14,420
Hispanics	18,320	6,940
Others	5,400	4,420
Total	109,140	130,920

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, unpublished data.

Table 16

Persons Employed in Farmwork, Age 55 and Over, California, 1980

Persons Employed in Farmwork	55 to 64 Years of Age	65 Years and Over
Whites	9,760	6,380
Blacks	840	560
Hispanics	9,600	3,120
Others	3,500	3,060
Total	23,700	13,120

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, unpublished data.

Table 17

Persons Employed in Farmwork, Age 55 and Over, Florida, 1980

Persons Employed in Farmwork	55 to 64 Years of Age	65 Years and Over
Whites	4,920	3,300
Blacks	4,060	2,300
Hispanics	1,040	360
Others	80	60
Total	10,100	6,020

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, unpublished data.

Table 18

Persons Employed in Farmwork, Age 55 and Over, Texas, 1980

Persons Employed in Farmwork	55 to 64 Years of Age	65 Years and Over
Whites	4,240	4,740
Blacks	1,160	2,800
Hispanics	5,040	2,480
Others	120	-
Total	10,560	10,020

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, unpublished data.

Table 19

Characteristics of Housing Units Occupied by Farmworkers, Age 55 and Over, U.S., 1980

Race	Total	With Complete Plumbing	Without Complete Plumbing	Percent Without Plumbing
		Age 55 to 64		
All Farm-workers	128,380	112,160	16,220	12.6
White	81,980	74,680	7,300	8.9
Black	20,500	14,600	5,900	28.8
Hispanic	20,320	17,660	2,660	13.1
Others	5,580	5,220	360	6.5
		Age 65 & Over		
All Farm-workers	107,560	91,260	16,300	15.2
White	80,440	71,040	9,400	11.7
Black	14,840	9,820	5,020	33.8
Hispanic	7,420	6,060	1,360	18.3
Others	4,860	4,340	520	10.7

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, unpublished data.

Table 20

Characteristics of Housing Units Occupied by Farmworkers, Age 55 and Over, California, 1980

Race	Total	With Complete Plumbing	Without Complete Plumbing	Percent Without Plumbing
		Age 55 to 64		
All Farm-workers	23,900	22,600	1,300	5.8
White	9,860	9,640	220	2.3
Black	740	720	20	2.7
Hispanic	10,140	9,120	1,020	10.1
Others	3,160	3,120	40	1.3
		Age 65 & Over		
All Farm-workers	13,000	12,780	700	5.4
White	6,320	6,220	100	1.6
Black	540	480	60	11.1
Hispanic	3,140	2,820	320	10.2
Others	3,000	2,780	220	7.3

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, unpublished data.

Table 21

Characteristics of Housing Units Occupied by Farmworkers, Age 55 and Over, Florida, 1980

Race	Total	With Complete Plumbing	Without Complete Plumbing	Percent Without Plumbing
		Age 55 to 64		
All Farm-workers	9,800	8,700	1,100	11.2
White	4,720	4,440	280	5.9
Black	3,980	3,360	620	15.6
Hispanic	1,040	840	200	19.2
Others	60	60	-	-
		Age 65 & Over		
All Farm-workers	5,960	8,700	1,100	11.2
White	3,240	3,160	80	2.5
Black	2,300	1,980	320	13.9
Hispanic	360	360	-	-
Others	60	40	20	33.3

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, unpublished data.

Table 22

Characteristics of Housing Units Occupied by Farmworkers, Age 55 and Over, Texas, 1980

Race	Total	With Complete Plumbing	Without Complete Plumbing	Percent Without Plumbing
		Age 55 to 64		
All Farm-workers	10,720	9,360	1,360	12.7
White	4,160	4,060	120	2.9
Black	1,440	1,180	260	18.1
Hispanic	5,020	4,040	980	19.5
Others	120	120	-	-
		Age 65 & Over		
All Farm-workers	8,960	8,180	780	8.7
White	4,700	4,520	180	3.8
Black	1,800	1,520	280	15.6
Hispanic	2,460	2,140	320	13.0
Others	-	-	-	-

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, unpublished data.

Table 23

Educational Attainment of Farmworkers, Age 55 and Over, U.S., 1980

Race	Years of School Completed			
	Age 55 to 64, Percent With		Age 65 & Over, Percent With	
	Less Than 8	12 or More	Less Than 8	12 or More
	(Percent)			
All Farm-workers	35	30	36	22
White	19	39	24	25
Black	62	11	76	7
Hispanic	77	8	80	7
Others	21	50	48	25

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, unpublished data.

Table 24

Persons by Origin and Language, South Rio Grande Valley of Texas, 1980

Characteristic	County				
	Cameron	Hidalgo	Starr	Willacy	Total
All Persons	209,727	283,229	27,266	17,495	537,717
Native Born	169,672	226,906	21,343	15,304	432,825
Foreign Born	40,055	56,323	5,923	2,191	104,492
Percent of Total	19.1	19.9	21.7	12.5	19.4
Naturalized	15,107	20,298	1,899	775	38,079
Not a Citizen	24,948	36,025	4,024	1,416	66,413
Mexican Born	35,032	51,107	5,381	2,000	93,520
Percent Foreign Born	87.5	90.7	90.8	91.3	89.5
Immigrated 1975-80	9,403	13,120	422	1,891	24,836
Persons Age 55 & Over	188,072	253,336	26,461	15,691	483,560
Speaks Language Other Than English At Home	144,096	203,595	23,383	12,509	383,583
Percent Age 55 & Over	76.6	80.4	88.4	79.7	79.3
Speaks English Not Well or Not at All*	41,052	60,606	8,431	3,031	113,120
Percent Age 55 or Over	21.8	23.9	31.9	19.3	23.4

* Proportion increases with age of resident.

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census

Table 25

Persons by Poverty, Age, and Spanish Origin, South Rio Grande Valley of Texas, 1980

Characteristic	County				
	Cameron	Hidalgo	Starr	Willacy	Total
All Persons*	207,468	281,298	27,052	17,411	533,229
Age 60 & Over	26,413	34,659	3,065	2,287	66,424
Age 65 & Over	19,272	25,075	2,254	1,709	48,310
Spanish Origin	160,424	229,263	26,252	14,033	429,972
Age 60 & Over	13,123	18,070	2,908	1,336	35,437
Age 65 & Over	9,538	12,874	2,138	999	25,549
Poor Persons	66,046	99,081	13,698	6,065	184,890
Poverty Rate (%)	31.8	35.2	50.6	34.8	34.7
Age 60 & Over	6,593	9,548	1,472	770	18,383
Poverty Rate (%)	25.0	27.5	48.0	33.7	27.7
Age 65 & Over	5,046	7,240	1,166	623	14,575
Poverty Rate (%)	26.2	28.9	51.7	36.5	30.2
Poor Persons of Spanish Origin	61,065	93,660	13,550	5,658	173,933
Poverty Rate (%)	38.1	40.9	51.6	52.8	40.5
Age 60 & Over	5,252	7,879	1,448	651	15,230
Poverty Rate (%)	40.0	43.6	49.8	48.7	43.0
Age 65 & Over	4,093	5,901	1,149	532	11,675
Poverty Rate (%)	42.9	45.8	53.7	53.3	45.7

*Sample does not include institutionalized persons (including many of the elderly).

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census

Table 26

Unrelated Individuals* by Poverty, Age, and Spanish Origin, South Rio Grande Valley of Texas, 1980

Characteristic	County				
	Cameron	Hidalgo	Starr	Willacy	Total
Unrelated Individuals	11,942	14,571	995	853	28,361
Poor Persons	4,932	5,940	694	492	12,058
Poverty Rate (%)	41.3	43.8	69.7	57.7	41.1
Age 65 & Over	4,788	5,511	497	480	11,276
Poor Persons	2,162	2,802	358	313	5,635
Poverty Rate (%)	45.2	50.8	72.0	65.2	50.0
Unrelated Individuals of Spanish Origin	5,970	7,139	950	473	14,532
Poor Persons	3,516	4,415	680	376	8,987
Poverty Rate (%)	58.9	61.8	71.6	79.5	61.8
Age 65 & Over	2,155	2,571	463	276	5,465
Poor Persons	1,606	2,058	351	252	4,267
Poverty Rate (%)	74.5	80.0	75.8	91.3	78.1

*Sample does not include institutionalized persons (including many of the elderly).

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census

Table 27

Housing Conditions for Elderly Householders of Spanish Origin, South Rio Grande Valley of Texas*, 1980

Characteristic	County				
	Cameron	Hidalgo	Starr	Willacy	Total
Occupied Housing Units	6,244	8,408	1,398	656	16,706
Owner Occupied	4,545	6,409	1,219	554	12,727 (76%)
Lacking Complete Plumbing	884	1,304	150	93	2,431 (15%)
No Complete Kitchen Facilities	648	959	203	39	1,849 (11%)
No Vehicle Available	2,751	3,168	559	265	6,743 (40%)
No Telephone	1,177	1,749	521	200	3,647 (22%)
Lacking Central Heating	4,776	6,434	166	577	11,943 (72%)
Lacking Air Conditioning	4,479	6,033	893	544	11,949 (72%)

*This sample includes only households with householder or spouse over 65. Most of the elderly of Spanish origin in the region live in households headed by the nonelderly and are thus subject to the housing conditions prevailing for the general population of Spanish origin.

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census.

Appendix B
Housing Assistance Council Loan Request Summary

Meeting Date : May 22, 1986
Review Number :
Ranking :

APPLICANT:
LOCATION :
PROJECT : 16 units FmHA 514/516 Farm Labor Project
HAC LOANS: NONE

REQUEST		RECOMMEND:	
Amount:	$61,750	Amount:	$61,750
Purposes :	site acquisition	Purposes :	site acquisition
Security :	first mortgage	Security :	first mortgage

Applicant's Background:

Applicant is a state chapter of La Raza Unida, and has experience in operating employment training programs.

Project Description:

16 unit family FmHA 514/516 farm labor housing project to be built on a site to be purchased from the Town of Jefferson. For reasons of political and public opposition, the site must be purchased when the option expires 05/31/86.

Project Status:

Discussion with the FmHA District Office indicates that the project is awaiting expiration of a two week comment period following publication of a Class II Environmental ad. Regardless of comment, the project application will be sent to the FmHA state office for approval. The land costs are acceptable, the application is in order and the District Office presently expects the project to go to completion.

Special Concerns:

The project has well organized local opposition directed against housing for Mexican-American farm workers.

No other concerns are apparent at this time except a quick turn around on land purchase.

Multiple Family Housing Summary of Project Costs

__ Estimate
__ Actual

APPLICANT NAME _____
DATE _____

Outside dimensions of buildings
Bldg. 1,2: 81-6 1/2 x 48-1 Bldg. 5:
Bldg. 3: 90-1 x 48-1
Bldg. 4: 91-8 1/2 x 48-1
Bldg. 5: 20-0 x 14-0

Number of Buildings 4
Number of Living Units 16

Number 3 BR Handicap	1	Sq. Ft.	1,325
Number 2 Bedrooms	12	Sq. Ft.	12,660
Number 3 Bedrooms	3	Sq. Ft.	3,645

	CONTRACT	BORROWER METHOD Material	Labor	TOTAL
UNIT COSTS				
Gen. Const.				402,800
Electrical				53,000
Heating				10,600
Plumbing				63,600
Landscaping				
Excavating				
Total Contracts				530,000
EQUIPMENT				
Range				
Refrigerator				
Washer/Dryer				
Total Equip.				
*Builders Fee				20,000
Total Construction				
Legal				2,000
Architect and Engineering				21,000
***Land-Optioned (x) Owned ( )				61,750
Street Improvement				
Sewer and Water to site				
Interest				
Contingency			3%	18,250
OTHER COSTS: Survey 1,000		Other DILHR 2,000		
I.O.C. 15,000		Printing 2,000		
TOTAL OTHER COSTS		Soil Borings 1,000		34,000
Total Project Cost		2% Operations 12,000		
Amount of Loan				687,000

Multiple Family Housing Summary of Project Costs cont.

FOR FmHA OFFICE USE

** Cost of Building _____ Cost per unit _____

Borrowers Initial Investment		Borrower Contribution to Project	
Land	_____	Land	_____
Cash to Project	_____	Cash	_____
Cash to O & M Acct.	_____	Total Contribution	_____
Total Investment	_____	Loan Amount	_____

* Allowed only when contract method of construction is waived by FmHA. (owner/builder) method of construction - Builder's fee determined by FmHa.

**Project cost less value of land, landscaping, street improvement, sewer and water.

***Insert FmHA appraised value, if final estimate: option price if estimate cost.